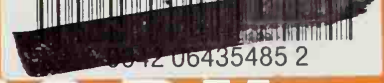


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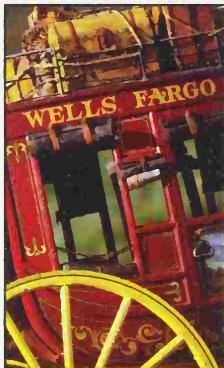
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ON THE COVER:

California Governor James "Sunny Jim" Rolph (1869–1934), pictured with his pilot Roscoe Turner, prepares to embark on another of his many trips round the state. During his 1930 campaign for governor, Rolph covered twenty-eight thousand miles by chartered airplane and visited every county, an unprecedented feat. He continued to travel at such a frenetic pace after his election that the media began to call him "California's flying governor."

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THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY is a statewide membership-based organization designated by the Legislature as the state historical society. Its mission is to engage the public's interest and participation in collecting, preserving, and presenting art, artifacts, and written materials relevant to the history of California and to support historical research, publication, and educational activities.

A quarterly journal published by CHS since 1922, *California History* features articles by leading scholars and writers focusing on the heritage of California and the West from pre-Columbian to modern times. Illustrated articles, pictorial essays, and book reviews examine the ongoing dialogue between the past and the present. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.

The Board of Trustees of the Society is pleased to announce the appointment of David Crosson, formerly President and CEO of History San Jose as the new Executive Director of the California Historical Society. Stephen Becker, the Society's Executive Director since 2001, is retiring after 33 years of service to museums and cultural organizations.

FROM THE EDITOR

GEOLOGY'S GUESTS

In California, we live with geological enormity. Everywhere, we see and feel the force of geology: In the Sierra, we gaze up and marvel at the tallest mountains in the continental United States, and only miles away, in Death Valley, we cast our eyes down and marvel at the lowest point in the nation. The magnificence of geology shows itself not only in those superlatives of elevation, but in the astounding variety of our topography: the Central Valley, the deserts, the transverse and coastal ranges, and the coast. The diversity, beauty, grandeur, horrors, and risks of all this would be enough to testify to geologic enormity, but there's more: All of it lies on one side or the other of the San Andreas Fault; we live in earthquake country.

The terror, fascination, mythology, scientific fact, suppositions, and superstitions surrounding earthquakes assemble into about a 9.2-magnitude California story. If there is but a single geological aspect of California that defines the state and its history, surely it is seismic power and abundance. The San Francisco earthquake and fire, whose centenary we commemorate this year, is "a watershed in California history, an essential turning point in the narrative of the state [for] it represents, in many ways, the genesis of contemporary California, the origin of our identification of the place as earthquake country, as a fractured landscape of devastating possibility" (p. 14). In *The Myth of Solid Ground: Earthquakes, Prediction, and the Fault Line Between Reason and Faith*, (NY: Viking, 2004), *Los Angeles Times* Book Review editor David L. Ulin ruminates on the historical, as well as the present and future implications of living in a perpetually seismic state. He questions his own uneasy peace with surviving the shakes and strives to detect how Californians withstand the stress and pressure of abiding along the big one, the San Andreas Fault.

In fact, the San Andreas and all the other faults own us; we are geology's guests. Making the most of life in the golden state, we live in denial: "For all of us who live in California, where, metaphorically or actually, everything is five hundred feet from the fault . . . [it's] a psychological defense mechanism, a survival tactic, a seismological bottom line" to just make it through each day. "In order to enter such a landscape, we need to walk away from . . . control from certainty, from the idea that order is something we can see . . . from ourselves, from our narrow view of time . . . To live with earthquakes is to have one foot in the present and the other in the deepest reaches of the past." (pp. 279 and 281)

Indeed, we are geology's guests.

JANET R. FIREMAN, *Editor*



California Historical Society.
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Jack London's Flask

Like other opportunistic journalists and photographers, Jack London (1876–1916) rushed to San Francisco to observe the effects of the 1906 earthquake and fires, commemorated in this issue of *California History*. London and his second wife Charmian were planning to begin a round-the-world voyage on their yacht the *Snark* that year, but the earthquake and other mishaps delayed their departure until April 1907.

London's friends presented him with this flask, made of silver and snake skin, to sustain him with libations through his voyage. Although supportive, "our friends cannot understand why we make this voyage," London wrote in a dispatch to the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*. "They shudder and moan and raise their hands. No amount of explanation can make them comprehend that we are moving along the line of least resistance;

that it is easier for us to go down to the sea in a small ship than to remain on dry land."

Charmian London presented the flask to poet George Sterling, one of her husband's closest friends, after London's death at the age of 40. London met Sterling in the 1890s and nicknamed him "Greek" for his aquiline nose. Sterling moved to Carmel with his wife Carrie, and an artist's colony formed around them that included

Charmian and Jack London welcome visitors aboard their boat the Snark. From left to right: Bertha Newberry, Mrs. Carlton Bierle, Charmian London, Carrie Sterling, James Hopper, Dick Partington, George Sterling, Jack London.

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Mary Austin, photographer Arnold Gente (well-known today for his photographs of the 1906 earthquake), and poet Nora May French.

Sterling is remembered today more for his friendship with London than for his poetry, although during his life he was considered the unofficial poet laureate of San Francisco and wrote plays for the Bohemian Club. These lines from "The City by the Sea—San Francisco" evoke the *Snark* and its graceful home port:

*Slender spars in the offing,
Mast and yard in the slips—
How they tell on the azure
Of the sea-contending ships!
Homeward into the sunset
Sill unwearied we go,
Till the northern hills are misty
With the amber of afterglow.*

After Sterling's suicide in 1926, arts patron Albert Bender donated the flask to the California Historical Society.

Excerpt from "The City by the Sea—San Francisco" from *The San Francisco Bulletin*, vol. 135, no. 19 (Nov. 30, 1922), p. 14. (<http://alanguillette.com/lit/sterling/citysea.htm>)



A view of Scorpion Anchorage and Anacapa Island in the distance.

SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

by Kathy Talley-Jones

"A volcano!" My five-year-old nephew Ellis catches his first sight of Santa Cruz Island from the Island Packers catamaran. It's a chilly and gray winter morning, and only a hesitant peak peers through the low clouds. I had expected we would have the boat to ourselves, but it is packed with hardy German tourists who face the stiff breeze with nothing more than light jackets. We, however, are bundled in

all the sweatshirts, fleece jackets, and scarves that can be found in a southern California household.

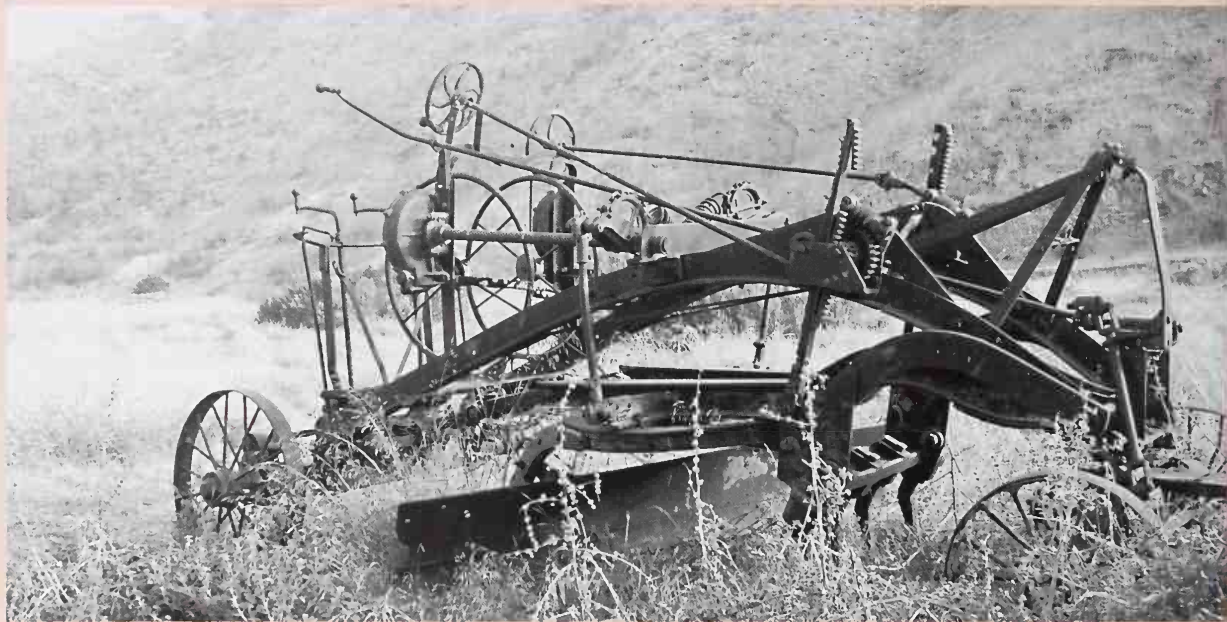
Ellis is disappointed to learn that Santa Cruz Island is not a volcano, even though it looks like one. But though the wind fingers its way through his two sweatshirts and Buckeye jacket, Ellis doesn't stay crabby for long—he's happily distracted by a pod of dolphins that plays off the bow of the

boat. We lean over the rail and Ellis takes pictures with my digital camera. I have learned to be vigilant and catch it when he accidentally drops it toward the froth and foam.

When we land at the Scorpion Anchorage after an easy hour's journey, we get enticed by the cobble beach and almost miss the ranger's hike. Ellis is a connoisseur of rocks. They tell him stories: mostly about violent events like landslides, volcanoes, and earthquakes. Rocks have strange qualities something like subatomic particles: violence, newness, and flavor. The rocks on the beach are salty, hurt when they fall on your toes, and are the "newest rocks I've ever seen," Ellis says.

We easily catch the ranger, but then, he can't get far. Access to the interior of the island is limited; most of the area owned by the National Park Service is temporarily closed so that the feral pigs can be eradicated once and for all. If you plan to go camping on the island, check first that the campgrounds are open with the Island Packers or National Park Service.

"Domestic pigs were turned loose on the island in the 1860s and became a major nuisance," Clifford McElrath notes in his very colorful memoir, *On Santa Cruz Island*—McElrath was cattle boss for the island's owners from 1919 to 1929. "We paid the men a bounty for every hog snout they brought in—two Toscano cigars for each snout. Cuate Ezpinoza had a small cur dog named Tiempo who was good at catching a small pig or sow by the ear and holding it until Cuate could catch it and kill it. The sows and piglets were not bad to eat, but as for the boars, I would as soon try to eat a wolf" (McElrath, p. 33)



A tractor-pulled road grader molders in the grass on Santa Cruz Island. The maker is unknown, but it probably dates to the 1920s or 1930s.

In 1997 the Caire/Gherini family holdings became park service lands encompassing about a quarter of the island, the rest of which is managed by the Nature Conservancy. Santa Cruz Island is the largest (96 square miles) of the islands off the coast of California, and in the interior of the island it is possible to feel as remote from the ocean as a canyon in the backcountry of the Santa Monica mountains.

We hike up to the headlands with the ranger, paying special attention to the soft chalky rocks and the slivers of schist that look like preformed Indian arrowheads. On the bluff is a large shell midden. Indians who lived on this island—and their history goes back ten thousand years—sat here to enjoy the view and keep an eye out for interesting goings-on at sea.

We decide this is a good spot for our own lunch. We are joined by a pair of ravens speculating loudly about the

crumbs we'll leave behind for them. From previous camping and kayak trips to the island I know that the ravens here are rowdy and insulting. Indeed, Clifford McGrath observed the same thing, although he hadn't learned the mnemonic "Wavens have wedgies" (wedge-shaped tails) and mistook the ravens for crows:

"The crows were the most ornery, mean, audacious, intelligent, and interesting of all the birds. They . . . made the Main Ranch their hangout. 'Hangout' is the only word that fits such a bunch of thieves and cutthroats. Abelino Lugo, a dour old California Spaniard who seemed to croak with the voice of doom, said, '*Son las almas de los Indios. Vuelvan a molestar a los blancos.*' (They are the souls of the Indians, returned to pester the white people)" (McElrath, p. 20)

Ellis throws carrot sticks and tofu bologna to the ravens. They sneer at our veggie fare and fly off to see what the Germans have to eat. Bratwurst, they hope, or potato chips at the very least.

After we hike to the edge of the park service property, we hook back up with the ranger. From the bluff he tells about Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, who sighted the island the Chumash people called Limu on October 13, 1542. Gaspar de Portolá claimed the island for Spain in 1769. Measles wiped out most of the Chumash Indians; the rest lived in the shadow of the Ventura and Santa Barbara missions.

The ranching era began on the island when Mexican Governor Alvarado granted the island to Andres Castillero. Justinian Caire purchased the island from its American owners in 1880 and built a ranch with its outlying buildings. Not only did he run a sheep

CALIFORNIA JOURNEYS

anch, but he also planted more than two hundred acres of Zinfandel, Reising, Burgundy, Muscatel, and Grenache grapes, bottled under the label of the Santa Cruz Winery.

We attempt to fly kites on the bluff, but the winter wind, so biting on the atamaran, has turned sweet and mild. Ah, California. The layers of sweat-shirts and jackets are tied around our waists or stuffed into knapsacks. We explore what's left of the ranch and its outbuildings. In the golden afternoon light, the rusted farm equipment looks like a lovely contemporary sculpture garden. Ellis snags my camera and takes thirty-seven photographs of the Caterpillar tractor logo shaped charmingly like—what else? —a caterpillar.

The farming equipment marks the remains of the Gherini family agricultural enterprise, the descendants of the Caire family who operated the ranch between 1926 and 1984. Off-loading the equipment was hazardous. A family memoir tells how

“a pick-up truck was being off-loaded. . . . The ocean surged around the cement pier, and as the boat's boom lifted the truck from the deck and swung it over the pier, the boom snapped like a toothpick. The truck dropped into the ocean and became another island relic” (Gherini, p. 200).

Ellis, who is delighted by mayhem, hopes to see the truck as the Island Packers catamaran chugs out of the anchorage. But after a busy day collecting rocks, he falls asleep in the tuffy cabin. He sleeps so soundly that we don't wake him to watch a large pod of dolphins chasing fish.

We shield our eyes and watch the magnificent animals leaping into the sunset.

The California Historical Society has been honored to receive the generous support of Polly Phleger Goodan (1922–2005), who cared deeply for Santa Cruz Island and was an active member of the Santa Cruz Island Foundation.

RESOURCES

Island Packers: For prices, schedules, and reservations, call or write: (805) 642-1393; Island Packers, 1691 Spinnaker Dr. Suite 105 B, Ventura, California 93001. www.islandpackers.com. Boats leave from Oxnard and Ventura harbors.

National Park Service, Channel Islands: <http://www.nps.gov/chis/>

[index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/chis/index.htm). Check this site for park closures.

The Nature Conservancy: A landing permit is required by all private boaters wishing to go ashore on The Nature Conservancy's portion of Santa Cruz Island. http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/california/features/sci_overview.html

Santa Cruz Island Foundation: <http://www.west.net/~scifmail/>

Gherini, John, *Santa Cruz Island: A History of Conflict and Diversity* (Spokane, WA: Arthur H. Clark, 1997).

McElrath, Clifford, *On Santa Cruz Island: The Ranching Recollections of Clifford McElrath* (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Historical Society, 1993).



A Caterpillar 30 tractor. It was used to grade roads around the island.

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY KATHY TALLEY-JONES

SIXTY STORIES IN SEARCH OF A CITY

BY GREG HISE

Recent scholarship in cultural and literary studies has shown how narrative and the stories we tell shape knowledge and our perception of the world. This is true for understanding people, politics, cultures, and economies as well as our assessment of cities.

Through story we have come to know Pittsburgh as a city of steel. Chicago we know as hog-butcher to the world. Detroit is the motor city. Los Angeles is the city shaped by automobiles, a metropolis of sunshine, citrus, and surf viewed through a windshield or rear view mirror. Southern California has been fertile ground for such narrative invention. These narratives have been told through words and through images, and the latter have been as significant as the former in creating what people then and now refer to as the "Southland," itself a fictive geography. The images that accompany this essay are suggestive of boosters' and place promoters' graphic inventiveness and of the trove of imagery they created. Rather than serving as illustrations in the sense of an image that reinforces a point or presents an idea in a different manner, the visual record these illustrations represent ought to be viewed as an essential primary source for the study of place and for analyses of the discourse, both textual and graphic, that has shaped knowledge, ideas, and visions of greater Los Angeles.¹

I want to consider narrative invention—the creation, use, and dissemination of stories—as well as the implications of the stories we tell. I begin with a survey of the standard talk about Los Angeles and then focus on two stories—Los Angeles, the city of the future, and Los Angeles, a world city—that have served as meta-narratives they are sufficiently broad and sufficiently elastic to encompass a host of other stories. However, for all the talk of futurity, modernity, and progress most Los Angeles stories ignore, obscure, or misinterpret a preeminent aspect of the modern city: manufacturing and industrialism. Recovering that history is critical for understanding economic and ecologies as well as immigration and demographics in the twentieth- and twenty-first-century metropolis. The same is true for claims of a world city whose origins can be traced to place entrepreneurs' robust and expansive territorial imaginations. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century boosters sought to fix Los Angeles as the central place in a regional economy with control of a hinterland stretching from the Canadian border into Mexico with ties across the Pacific to South Asia. In their stories, Los Angeles would be the entrepôt for a Pacific Rim century. What those who told such stories never counted on was that the world would come to greater Los Angeles and it is in the latter mostly unintended form that the metropolis now constitutes a world city.

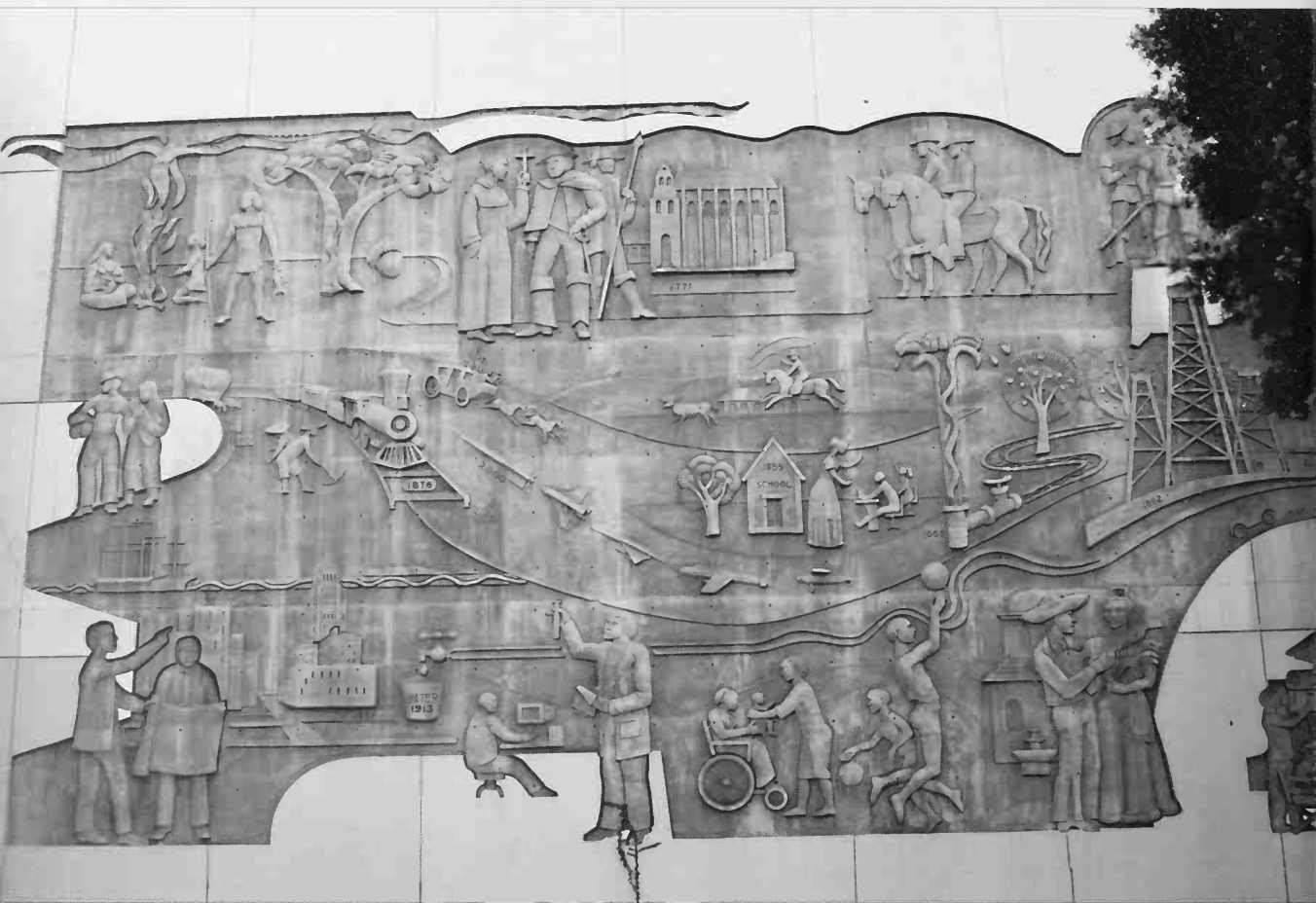
Interwoven with this descriptive analysis are reflections on why particular stories have dominated popular and academic discourse about southern California. In effect the guiding questions are: What do specific stories highlight, what



Journalist Sarah Comstock, in a 1928 Harper's article, described a night-time view from Mount Wilson, "looking out over Los Angeles and her satellites of sixty towns." Carey McWilliams later quoted Comstock spouting a familiar trope about Los Angeles: "Towns do not develop here. They are instantly created, synthetic communities of a strangely artificial world. Plant a few yellow and green stucco bungalows, a few shops, a real estate office, a church, a soda fountain, a school, a movie theater, a cafeteria, and a filling station—and there you are. Another satellite. Another demonstration of growth."

NIGHT-TIME VIEW OF LOS ANGELES FROM MULHOLLAND DRIVE, 1956. PHOTOGRAPH BY "DICK" WHITTINGTON.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LIBRARIES, ON BEHALF OF THE USC SPECIALIZED LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS.



Los Angeles Times parking structure, Broadway façade, bas relief, poured-in-place concrete, Tony Sheets, sculptor (1987). This chronicle of city-building begins with the Gabrielino Indians (upper left), who apparently relied on acorns and fire and little else. The story then moves to resource extraction and the tapping of nature's bounty via irrigation, to the reduction of distance via stage and rail connections, to enterprise and innovation in, for example, aviation and aerospace with a sequence that moves from a plane, to jets, to missiles in the middle ground. Greg Hise

do they diminish, and how has this changed over time? Finally, because I have come to appreciate the utility (perhaps the necessity) of stories for making sense of the world, and because my work in Los Angeles history has shown how effectively stories have served those who want to make change, I suggest we ought to become more reflective and selective about the stories we tell, that we become better at using story strategically and with purpose. We might begin such conversations by asking: What stories do we value? How might we incorporate these in public history and public memory? What stories might we tell as we work to achieve our aspirations for community and for a better city? I close with two examples suggestive of the alternative stories we might choose to tell and suggest what the possible implications might be for the city and region were we to do so.

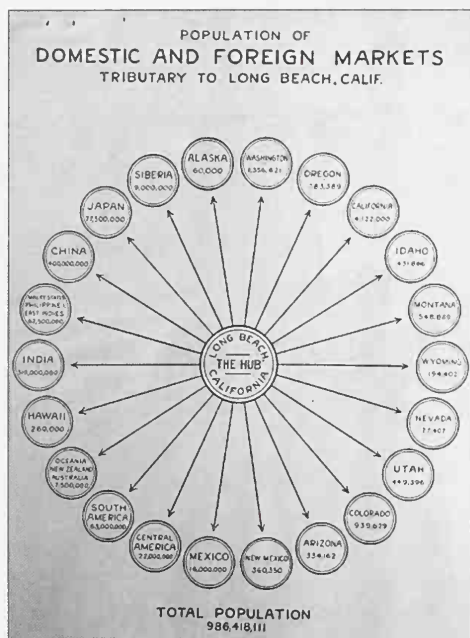
THE STORIES WE TELL

Imagine that everyone who read this essay created a list of Los Angeles stories and that we then compiled these lists. There would be some variance, of course, in the order in which stories were listed and in their number. Yet the aggregate list most likely would include chestnuts such as these: that the region's climate and setting (or geomorphology) make southern California Edenic; that the city that "just grew" here, to borrow a phrase from resident chronicler Boyle Workman, was built without forethought (it was unplanned); that the principal builders were retirees from Iowa; that these newcomers and their counterparts from other parts of the nation purchased single-family houses in suburbs (it is a city of homeowners); once here these arrivistes recast a sleepy backwater into an American city (that is a city with a population predominantly white and Protestant); that their enterprise and their unprecedented adoption of the automobile beginning in the 1920s created a fragmented metropolis, a city lacking a physical center; that World War II ushered in a second gold rush; then during the post-World War II era Los Angeles became a capital of sprawl. Whether you view these events and this

history as a march of progress or a lamentable decline (or some combination of the two) we recognize in all these stories a metropolis and region cast as a place where the future happens first (this city's present is other cities' future), where the past has little or no purchase on the present or possible futures.³

For all the talk of futurity, modernity, and progress, most Los Angeles stories ignore, obscure, or misinterpret a preeminent aspect of the modern city: manufacturing and industrialism.

Other stories, of equivalent imaginative power, held with similar conviction, present what are in effect counterfactuals. How often have we heard it asserted with absolute certainty that Los Angeles is a city constructed in a desert? (It may be Eden, but it's an irrigated Eden, and hence its founders and those who followed were misguided when siting a city here.) Yet during the first months of 2005 a look at the weather page revealed why handicapping an eclipse of the rainfall record (the 38.19 inches collected during the 1883–84 season) had become a civic sport of sorts. In Altadena and other foothill communities the sixty-plus inches recorded that season was as close to the minimum metric for a rain forest (more than one hundred inches of rainfall per year) as it was to the maximum for a desert (less than ten inches of rainfall per year). Weather reporters' repeated references to "epochal rains" of "biblical proportions" conveyed both a degree of bravado (look at what Angelenos have endured) and an implied belief the city is indeed exceptional (no other city has been beset and besieged by so much rainfall). Obscured by such claims is the fact that just three years prior (2001–02) the seasonal total of 4.42 inches was a record low.⁴



Long Beach Chamber of Commerce, "Population of Domestic and Foreign Markets" (1925). Boosters projected Long Beach, and the Los Angeles-San Pedro harbor, as "hubs" for a trade empire extending across the intermountain West north to Siberia, Alaska, and Canada, south into Mexico and Central America, and reaching across the Pacific to China, Japan, and South Asia. In 1925 that market tapped a population of close to one billion.

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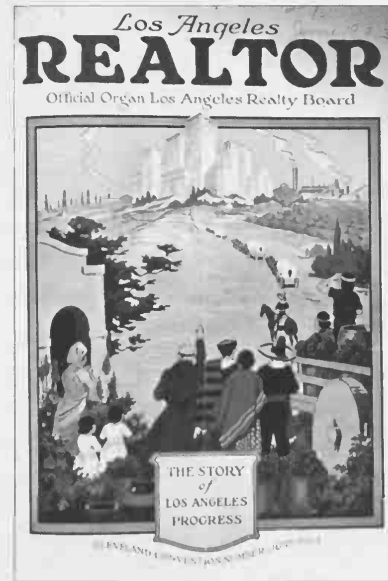
In a similar vein, while we often hear about the role individual initiative and individual decisions have made in shaping the city (residents "voting with their feet" in favor of lower density and physical distance from those unlike themselves) we hear just as often that the machinations of an oligarchic elite in pursuit of personal gain shaped the city. (An elite that included Harrison Gray Otis, Harry Chandler, Henry Huntington, and fellow members of associations such as the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce [LAACC or chamber], and the Merchants and Manufacturers Association.) Or we could reference booster rhetoric from the first decades of the twentieth century when advocates for weaning the local economy off tourism and real estate promoted "balanced progress" with new factories and enhanced foreign trade as the building blocks for future growth. An editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* "Midwinter Edition" of 1905 claimed the city had become an "important manufacturing center. . . . Today in the main thoroughfares [visitors and residents] behold the business bustle of New York, along the old river bed a small Pittsburgh of factories and workshops, away toward the west a sweep of parklike lands covered with the homes that have made Los Angeles world famous."

Pittsburgh—or paradise? Considered relationally these stories are in tension. Can a city be an expanding metropolis with all that entails (growing population, increasing numbers of manufactories, an enlarged municipal and county government) while also serving as a model of anti-city, a metropolis that rejected its urbanity in "favor of its suburbs"? (To borrow a theme from Robert Fogelson's *Fragmented Metropolis*.) Exceptionalism is implicit in Fogelson's title. Los Angeles is the fragmented metropolis. Other cities are either whole or less fragmented. Fogelson wrote his account in the mid-1960s. It is conceivable the book responds to the events of 1965, the "riot" in Watts, and urban unrest more generally. It is also conceivable that in writing this account the author strove to retrace a path that led from pueblo to town to city, from community to social segregation and state violence. In other words,

Fogelson's history has a history. Understanding that history—the time, place, and context within which people create, disseminate, and recast stories—is essential for understanding why certain narratives stick and how particular accounts become dominant.⁶

So, for example, in Auguste Duhaut-Cilly's 1827 account of a passage from San Pedro to the Pueblo of Los Angeles he describes the southern plain as a "beautiful carpet of grass, mixed with heath." This appearance was deceptive; once he disembarked to hunt the carpet turned out to be a "thick vegetation of mustard, already reaching above a man's head. . . . [W]e plunged into this veritable forest and soon repented having done so." Thomas Catesby Jones retold his passage between the same points, San Pedro and the Pueblo, in 1843. In "A Visit to Los Angeles" he describes features such as barely perceptible dry ravines, fifty to one hundred and fifty yards in width that "long since ceased to serve as conduits for surplus waters from the mountains. . . . Everything was arid and parched as far as the eye could extend; nor was there a single tree or shrub of any kind to be seen on this extensive table land, except here and there, a specimen of some of the dwarf varieties of the cactus[.]" The "almost total absence of living vegetation on this plain" afforded Jones "conclusive evidence of the vast diminution of snow and rain," evidence he saw as supporting Humboldt's thesis that for want of water portions of the North American Continent "are destined to become a desert waste."⁷

When members of California's State Agricultural Society visited Los Angeles in 1858—a decade into the American era, a time when Los Angeles was more a Yankee pueblo than an American city—they traveled from San Gabriel and entered "on a road, street, lane, alley, or avenue, so unlike anything else seen, that we know not what to call it. It is sixty or eighty feet broad . . . entirely closed in on both sides by live-willow-fences . . . [creating] one continuous row of deep green foliage, twenty or thirty feet high[.] This continues about three-fourths of a mile, when we arrive at the



Los Angeles Realtor (June 1923). "Progress" portrayed as a narrative of ascension. In the foreground a padre and dons are framed on one side by an adobe façade with a woman and children (representing family and traditions of religion and home). On the other side indigenous laborers stand atop la carreta (loaded with grapes and wine, nature's bounty) and face the future city, a cluster of gleaming towers on a hill, surrounded by but seemingly unsullied as a result of proximity to smoke-stack industry and the prowess of manufacturing and trade. The middle ground, of agriculture and citriculture, is a passage that settlers, presumably from the East and Midwest, traverse between an old world based in custom and the modern world with its height, speed, connectivity, production, and spectacle.

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town proper, where the adobe walls take the place of the garden trees[.] . . . [Los Angeles] "is a city of several thousand inhabitants, cultivating not only fruits of the temperate zone but many of those of the torrid, together with the floral and arboreal productions of every clime."⁸

A carpet of grass and heath, a desert waste, or a botanical garden; it depends on the time of year a traveler visits, that year or the previous year's rainfall, and the direction of approach. But the stories these visitors told were also products of what they knew (their frame of reference) and what they expected to see (what stories, which representations of the Southland they had heard, read, or seen prior to travel).

Benjamin Taylor, who spent the summer of 1878 in California, titled the chapter recounting his time in Los Angeles "A Trip to the Tropic," a reference to what he expected to find when he passed through the Southern Pacific tunnel and into the San Fernando Valley. What he found on his arrival might be described best as a city of contrast. His view from the carriage window was of dry fields, palm leaves as "gray as elephant's ears," and of a landscape with a "disused air . . . when everything is in curl-papers like a woman's hair before breakfast," a depiction, he notes, that would raise an Angelian's [sic] "fur of indignation." Yet two paragraphs later Taylor answers a rhetorical query "where is Los Angeles" with a description of place where "ocean winds breathe upon [a city] . . . where the flowers catch fire with beauty; among the orange groves; beside the olive trees . . . where the figs of Smyrna are turning; where the bananas of Honolulu are blossoming; where the chestnuts of Italy are dropping . . . in vineyards six Sabbath-days' journeys across them; in the midst of a garden of thirty-six square miles—there is LOS ANGELES."⁹

We would call Taylor's initial description empiric—it is direct observation of a material place—and the latter imaginative or poetic—it is a rehearsal of what travelers such as Taylor had heard about southern California from sources such as George Rice's *Southern California Illustrated* or Charles

Dudley Warner's *Our Italy*. Though Warner cautions prospective émigrés to consider the magnitude of change from a "landscape clad with verdure, the riotous and irrepressible growth of a rainy region, to a land that the greater part of the year is green only where it is artificially watered," he prefaces this disclaimer with a recitation of attributes that make southern California an "agreeable place of residence": the productiveness of the soil and variety of products, the equability of summer and winter and the ease of outdoor labor throughout the year, the certainty of returns for intelligent investment and the advantages for personal health.¹⁰

Benjamin Taylor's divergent stories underscore a truism of social history, urban history, and related fields; at any moment in time there are multiple stories about place in play. Reading Duhaute-Cilly, Jones, Taylor, Warner, and other sources reminds us that all such stories are partial; they capture and convey aspects of experience. Partiality is intrinsic to the form. An effective story is pithy, it points toward essence. A recent example underscores both points. Whether we consider the events following the verdict in the trial of the police officer accused of beating "motorist" Rodney King a "riot," an "uprising," or a "civil unrest" (or some amalgam of the three) says a lot about our politics, our worldview, our position, our aspirations. Riot, uprising, civil unrest; these are, in effect, competing narratives, and the tellers base their accounts on a shared set of facts.¹¹

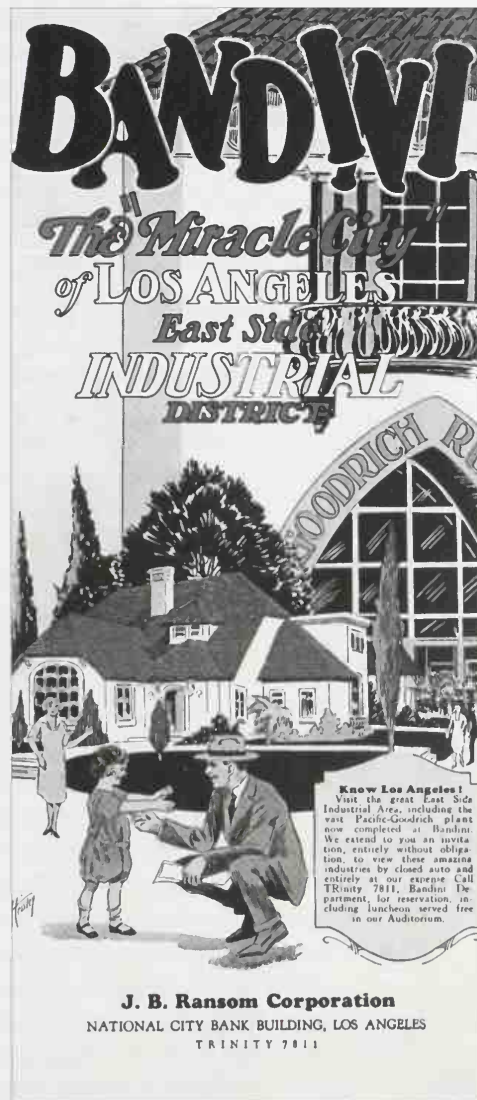
A well-known and oft-repeated Los Angeles story is of a city that spread, a metropolis that grew like the annular rings of a tree, the product of unchecked development and a dearth of planning. When a colleague reviewed my book *Magnet* in the *Los Angeles* for a history email discussion group H-Urban, he forwarded a response he received from an editor at a historical society in the Midwest. The email begins cordially with an acknowledgment of the reviewer's effort and the author's claim of "enduring interest" in southern California. Then he gets down to business.

Your first paragraph on the Hise book (whether this is your understanding of the topic or your sense of his understanding or both) has a serious blind spot: "The principles of modern community planning . . . developed within the real estate profession itself," etc. Come again? 'Principles' simply cannot coexist in the same sentence with 'real estate profession.' Maybe Hise heard something about 'principals' in real estate deals and got confused. The notion of struggles . . . over progressive ideas of community planning taking place in the trailer-offices that cut-throat developers set up in the orange groves that they were busily chopping down is pretty risible. Only in academia. Someone should take Hise to see *The Two Jakes*.

I share this assessment with you solely for the conviction with which this pundit makes his point. He knows the truth (it's an oft-told story). No need to bother, apparently, with a book that claims otherwise. The book's author, which is me, would get it right, it seems, if I spent more time at the movies and less in the archives.¹²

In a sense, I set myself up for this manner of invective when I chose *Planning the Twentieth-Century Metropolis* for the subtitle. "Los Angeles" and "planning" are not terms that couple easily in the popular imagination. When, on occasion, they are brought together, it is typically for one of two reasons. The first is a humorous one-liner, the joke merely the phrase itself, "planning Los Angeles," which for most listeners or readers is simply an oxymoron. Alternatively, Los Angeles is offered as an object lesson. The "sprawling," "smog-choked" metropolitan region has become an icon, the great what-not-to-do of twentieth-century urban planning.

Yet we rarely stop to ask if these processes and attributes associated so prominently in the popular imaginary with Los Angeles are unique or distinctive. Comparative analysis reveals that



J. B. Ransom Corporation brochure for Bandini (c. 1927). Land developers, realtors, and builders, in conjunction with city planners, elected officials, and place-based institutions, engaged in the design, construction, and marketing of single-family residence districts with a compliment of community services adjacent to manufacturing on the Eastside. Realtor J. B. Ransom subdivided and sold property for housing and industry in the Bandini tract.

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unless constrained by decree or by topography, all cities expand in area. Even cities with declining populations, such as present-day Philadelphia and St. Louis, are growing geographically. More critical, Los Angeles is neither the first so-called “spread city” nor the most expansive. Pierce Egan,

Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century boosters sought to fix Los Angeles as a world city, the central place in a regional economy with control of a hinterland stretching from the Canadian border into Mexico with ties across the Pacific to South Asia.

writing about London in the 1820s, noted that despite legislators’ alarm, the metropolis continued to advance to a “most gigantic size.

Conjecture dares not fix its limits, for every succeeding year we see some waste ground in the suburbs reclaimed and covered with dwellings; some little village or hamlet in the suburbs united by a continuous street to the metropolis; until what once, and that at no remote period, was London and its environs, is now one great compact city, likely to verify the prediction of James I that ‘England will shortly be London and London England.’”¹³

In Los Angeles, the sprawl thesis is based on higher-than-average rates of auto ownership, discontent with public transit, and residents’ putative fascination with the relative freedoms autos provided to those who could afford them. The story, according to Fogelson, is of people abandoning a city for its suburbs. When Richard Longstreth documented the centrality of Los Angeles’s central business district (CBD) for retail into the 1930s, he uncovered a different narrative; con-

temporaries pointed to traffic congestion and a lack of adequate parking as the critical variables, factors often overlooked in “Roger Rabbit” accounts of corporate conspiracy by automakers, tire producers, and the petroleum industry. During the 1920s and 1930s, retailers, investors, planners, and Los Angeles’s civic elite viewed congestion—a density of people, activities, and transit—as certain death for the CBD and its concentration of department stores and ancillary retail. In other words, they were telling a different story about automobility and the modern city. Note that we now view congestion as desirable and have been investing considerable effort and funds into creating a “24/7” downtown.¹⁴

MODERNITY AND PROGRESS

Modernity and Progress (both with capital letters) have been enduring themes for Los Angeles stories. In 2004, before Los Angeles officials misread or misinterpreted the state of California stem cell agency’s requirements for its soon-to-be developed headquarters complex, then Mayor James Hahn touted his city’s advantages in simple terms. “No other city,” Hahn informed the agency’s board, “embodies the future quite like Los Angeles.” We find similar talk in guidebooks to the region. A recent Eyewitness guide informs readers that the “myth, the velocity, the edginess in creative and technological fields—this is Los Angeles, where the multicultural future that awaits the rest of the country is already a firm reality.”¹⁵

Beginning in the 1880s, hagiographies of pioneer city builders chronicled a municipality on the make. All such accounts depict newcomers—earnest and forthright, steadfast in their labor—overcoming obstacles and adversity to put their city on the map. These texts feature lithographs or photographs of civic elites (men engaged in skilled professions) and quantitative accountings of bank deposits, property appraisals, building permits, and the like, a litany of growth and expansion. The local bias belies an implied comparison. Though written and presented as history, it is the future that is the true focus for these stories. The past is a prelude for the city to come.

That city will be a great commercial entrepôt, a magnet for people and capital. It will rival all other cities for distinction as a capital for the Pacific Slope, the Great West, a Pacific Century, or ever more grand and grandiloquent claims of territorial expansion. These local histories marshal metrics favorable to one city in order to highlight its advantages over other cities. Maps, charts, and additional graphics illustrate boosters' projections of territory, a sphere of influence, a domain in which the dominant city, in this case Los Angeles, will exert its political, economic, and cultural authority. Often these promotional texts serve as sourcebooks for urban myths or city stories.¹⁶

There are parallels at the scale of world history. The received narrative of California is of a place apart—a site for a new, improved race, a paradise waiting only for the shaping hand of white men. (Think here of European myths of Queen Calafia, the accounts of Spanish explorers and settlers, late nineteenth-century booster rhetoric, or chamber of commerce pronouncements from the 1920s and 1930s.) In effect, from the Spanish colonists to the Anglo-American conquest, ideas about California were tropes of modernity. From the 1850s forward, Los Angeles entrepreneurs imagined the creation of a “back country” empire with their metropolis the epicenter of a hinterland over which they would exercise influence. Like their counterparts in New York and Chicago, manufacturers, financiers, and businessmen in Los Angeles sought to control dependent territory; their city would be a center for converting hinterland resources into commodities and a center for consumption. Their objectives were material and symbolic. They sought to influence national and international trade in goods and in ideas in order to scale up their authority from the local to the regional and then to the Pacific Rim.¹⁷

With hindsight we can view these stories as variations on a theme. What began as projections and bold claims about a possible future, when (never if) the metropolis achieved its predestined position at the pinnacle of an urban hierarchy, Los

Angeles would assume its stature as a world city, a capital for production and trade, of finance, of culture. As history also reveals, realizing bold ambitions engenders unintended consequences. Los Angeles may have become a node in networks of culture and commerce that are increasingly global, but by achieving this objective the world has come to southern California in ways utterly contrary to what turn-of-the-twentieth-century boosters imagined and desired.

I will return to the global after telling a different story about modernity and progress drawn from a history of industrial Los Angeles. What could be more modern than manufacturing and industrial production? Modern industry transformed every aspect of American society and culture; the nature of work and social reproduction, transportation and communication, finance and the legal system, politics and institutions. Think of Ford's assembly line; Taylor's time-and-motion studies; the rise of corporations and the corporate skyscraper; Marx and theories of the working class; unions, strikes, the eight-hour day; workers' compensation; leisure and mass consumption—the list goes on. It is a history so fundamental to contemporary life that we know it intellectually as a history and experientially as our lives. Where is California and Los Angeles in this history? Mostly absent, despite the fact that the state is now the world's sixth largest economy and that it leads the nation in manufacturing jobs with nearly twice the number of Texas, which is ranked second in terms of absolute employment. Yet histories of industrial development are centered elsewhere, in New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Detroit.¹⁸

Uncovering a history of production and industry in Los Angeles requires the reconstruction of a landscape that was largely invisible to contemporaries and that has remained almost invisible up to the present. When industry has been included in the southern California scene, every decade or so, it has been presented as a revelation rather than a historical formation. For example, a 1930 Automobile Club of Southern California guidebook sent tourists on a windshield survey of the

city market, refineries, packinghouses, and industrial plants stretching from its Figueroa Street headquarters east to Vernon. In 1949 a journalist for *Fortune* magazine described a drive east from Redondo Beach along 190th Street as passing through a “truck farm landscape with acres of new factories.” This trope played off readers’ conceptions of Los Angeles as both a place of agricultural abundance and a boom city: “In and around the city in the space of a very few years there has grown up one of the great industrial complexes in the world.”¹⁹

The historical record suggests Angelenos overlooked both the industry associated with agriculture, such as beet sugar refineries and canneries, and the factories sprouting in fields (as described in *Fortune*) where workers produced metal goods, glass, fertilizer, ceramics, and the like. Angelenos shared with their contemporaries across the nation and in much of the industrialized world a belief that industry meant heavy industries with smokestacks, a large number of employees, and the command and control associated with vertical and horizontal integration. Up to the 1920s there were few firms in the region that fit this description. Local firms tended to be family-owned, to produce for a regional market, and to be responsive to changes in market demand. Note these attributes are precisely those that economists, economic geographers, and historians of business and technology associate with a putatively new paradigm, flexible specialization or flexible production.²⁰

Realtors, property owners, and associations such as the LAACC’s Industrial Department advertised nationally to entice firms either to move to southern California or to establish their West Coast branch plants in the region. The chamber and other promoters mounted industrial fairs, exhibits, and parades touting “Nature’s Workshop,” the chamber’s stock phrase intended to promote the benefits of a benign climate for production and social reproduction. At the same time, local firms such as Southern California Packing and Los Angeles Soap were constructing their plants in a mixed-use zone stretching from Elysian

Park south to Ninth Street, straddling both sides of the Los Angeles River between Alameda Street on the west, extending into East Los Angeles and along the base of the bluff below Boyle Heights. For a half century or more the manufacturing district along the river housed a diversity of activities and people similar to the central city industrial districts we associate with New York, Chicago, and other cities where specialty firms, small jobbers, mercantilists, and warehousing all contributed to regional economies.²¹

As in Manchester, Pittsburgh, Chicago, and other production centers, Angelenos were at odds over the relative benefits and costs associated with industrial development. Boosters in favor of manufacturing extolled the benefits associated with the “golden smoke of industry.” Residents living adjacent to manufacturing plants, in districts with a mix of residences and production, or in a district zoned for industrial development such as those along the Los Angeles River and in the Eastside (a district parallel to the river and the railroad stretching to present-day Commerce) challenged elected officials to reconcile the effect industry had on the landscape and local ecologies. For example, in December 1901 property owners from the seventh ward petitioned the city council regarding smells emanating from oil refineries. Petitioners suspected there were too few “well to do” citizens living near these oil refineries to make petitioning effective. “Besides, the line of demarcation between smells in the ‘muddy eighth [council district],’ they wrote, “is not plain enough to make out a case against any [single] law-breaker. There’s the soap factory on First; the hide warehouse on Ducommon; the gas plant on Aliso; Chinatown on Alameda; Cudahy’s meat shop on Macy; [a] bone fertilizer works on Macy; the pickle factory on First and several more establishments for curing, drying, burning, embalming and issuing vile smells. [T]he people that own these money-making plants are very careful to live on the other side of town, where their children can grow up in a healthy atmosphere.” Not that this litany of nuisance and residents’ response is akin to what we would call NIMBYism (NIMB

= Not In My Back Yard). Note too the inclusion of Chinatown in the petitioners' accounting of sources for "vile smells." A conflation of race with nuisance land uses was common in Los Angeles and other cities, as Kay Anderson has shown in her analysis of Vancouverites' "imagined geography" of Chinatown.²²

We find similar tensions over progress and its attendant costs and the shaping of urban space into zones for labor and zones of privilege in attempts to locate Southern California Smelting's plant in East Los Angeles near the intersection of Ninth Street and Hostetter Avenue during the 1890s. The opposition, primarily residents of East Los Angeles concerned with public health and environmental degradation in the district, adopted a novel strategy for their presentations to the council and the press. Rather than draw attention toward an anticipated loss in property value and in use value, they couched their critique in the logic and language of public interest, a greater, or larger, good. In their defense of the status quo (whether they defined this as maintaining healthful air, public health, or the health of lawns, shrubs, and fruit trees) residents emulated the boosters' rhetoric of climate, cleanliness, and nature's bounty. Where the council and promoters of industrial development viewed every firm and factory as a symbol of progress, opponents suggested the Eastern press would seize upon the smelter as a means to "prejudice" their readers against Los Angeles as a place of residence. While boosters in favor of industrial development cast the smelter as a sign of manufacturing prowess and a robust economy, opponents offered an

alternative vision, the smelter as a black smudge on the city's image. Local residents were insisting, in effect, that narratives of Eden ought to govern the development of districts where they lived. They found a positive social value in those stories and used them instrumentally to make change. (In this case change took the form of maintaining the status quo.)²³

From the 1880s forward the city council minutes record a sustained and often divisive contest over

Little Tokyo Business Association banner, Second Street at Central Avenue (2005). The City of Los Angeles and local associations rely on banners and signs such as this example from Little Tokyo to mark boundaries and delineate borders among districts and subdistricts within the metropolitan region. Districts so designated range in area from a few square blocks to square miles in the case of "Downtown," "Hollywood," and "Koreatown."

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the use and regulation of land among block and neighborhood-level alliances, manufacturers and other business leaders, and elected officials. One pragmatic, functional response to these struggles was to segregate activities and the council, following upon German precedent, enacted a series of ordinances parsing the city into two residential and seven industrial districts. Though consistent with a history of policing “nuisance” or noxious activities by restricting these to less desirable sections or forcing proprietors beyond municipal boundaries, the Los Angeles statutes of 1904, 1907, and 1910 were the first such regulations in an American city.²⁴

At the same time, reformers also turned to formal design and civic architecture, in the manner associated with Daniel Burnham and the City Beautiful, in an effort to recast Los Angeles and to avoid the “crowded tenement and rookery” found in New York and Chicago. On the one hand, these were local initiatives, of the type associated with municipal art commissions—eliminating ugliness, rendering the city more beautiful, arousing public sentiment through the building of ornamental bridges, the construction of public baths and gymnasias, the lighting of city streets, and the removal of billboards. Angelenos adopted such a commission in 1903 and were among the first to approve a playground commission (1904) and to establish a regional planning commission (1922).²⁵

On the other hand, Angelenos shared with their counterparts in smaller towns and so-called second-tier cities a belief in the power of a plan as a signifier of progress and uplift as well as a means to ascend into the first rank of America’s cities. Engaging outside experts, like a Burnham, Frederick Law Olmsted, or Edward Bennett, provided instant cachet in San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, or Denver—in effect any of the many locales which employed planners with national, even international reputations. The Los Angeles Art Commission invited Charles Mulford Robinson to consult in 1906. In thirty days he produced an orthodox City Beautiful proposal with a monu-

mental civic and cultural center atop Bunker Hill, a new union railway station along Central Avenue and a system of pleasure drives linking parks and urban open spaces, including the “quaint little Plaza,” from the city center out to the ocean. The elements Robinson articulated appeared and reappeared in plans from that point forward.²⁶

With this history in mind we can then see the Walt Disney Concert Hall and current plans to redesign Grand Avenue as a boulevard for the arts as the latest phase in a project with a genesis in turn-of-the-twentieth century City Beautiful ideals. Implementing such plans required federal intervention in the form of urban renewal. In the immediate post-World War II years the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) oversaw the removal of almost ten thousand residents of a mixed-race, mixed-income community, the re-engineering of Bunker Hill and the construction in the 1960s of the Music Center, a complex then seen with the Department of Water and Power headquarters as the western terminus for the civic center. Current plans render these structures as the northern edge of a linear culture district that includes the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Disney Hall, the Colburn School of Performing Arts, and the Museum of Contemporary Art.²⁷

WORLD CITY

Walking along Grand Avenue pedestrians can catch glimpses of another Los Angeles landmark: the Westin Bonaventure, a hotel Frederic Jameson made famous as an exemplar of the putative post-modern. Jameson’s claims for a “cultural logic of late capitalism” and the Bonaventure as a “mutation in built space” offer a bridge from stories of progress and modernity to stories about a world city. For Jameson and theorists of world cities Los Angeles is a node in economies, societies, and cultures that are increasingly networked. Urbanists use the designation “world” or “global city” for metropolitan regions that function as centers for command and control. The “things” a global city makes, Saskia Sassen tells us, “are services and goods.” Her cases are London, Tokyo, and New

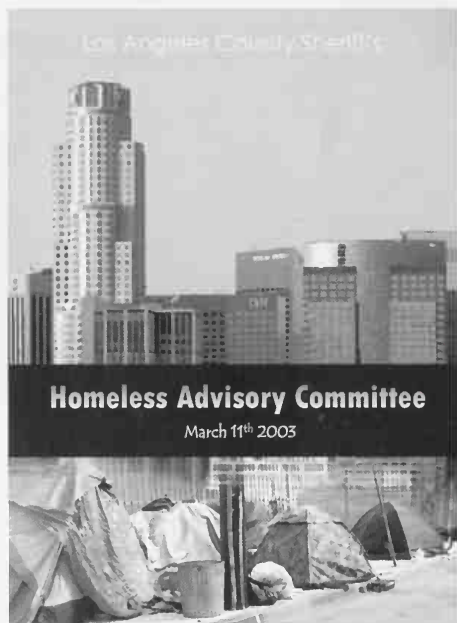


Guadalupe Wedding Chapel, 237 South Broadway (2005). Corporate towers along Grand Avenue and Flower Street on Bunker Hill are a striking contrast of scale with this family-owned business whose clients desire a wedding (in one of five chapels) complete with gowns, tuxedos, and jewelry. Ceremonies offered also include the Quinceañera ("Sweet 16") celebration, and divorce, immigration, and income tax assistance are also available. Note the evocation of European classicism (engaged columns, broken pediment, faux-masonry façade), the 800 number in the cast-stone inscriptions, and the bus stop.

GREG HISE

York, centers of finance and commerce, capitals of capital. Circuits of trade, the global flows of bits and bytes that allow for near simultaneous transaction across territory, coagulate at these material sites. Sassen and other world city theorists model London, Tokyo, and New York as thick nodes in networks linking banks, investors, geographically dispersed corporations, and the lawyers, accountants, and others who help keep capital in motion.²⁸

In this sense of the term, if Los Angeles is a world city, it is decidedly in the second-tier. For the most part, firms and institutions with head-



This Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (2003) publication juxtaposes corporate high rises, photographed from a distance with a telephoto lens to portray a density and compactness, and an encampment for those who live on streets in Los Angeles's central business district. The tall buildings rising above and graphically separate from the latter conveys a trope common among those who promote Los Angeles as a paradigm of postmodern urbanism.

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quarters in Los Angeles oversee a regional economy, much as turn-of-the-twentieth century boosters imagined. (In effect the stories they told, their projections, have become our truths, the world we live in.) The film industry and cultural production may be the exception and point us toward a different mode of thinking about claims for a global city, a consideration of the world in southern California and southern California in the world.²⁹

We hear the former in popular use when people talk about greater Los Angeles as the metropolitan region where the largest number or greatest concentration of X people reside, where X represents those residents whose place of birth in a nation such as Mexico, Vietnam, or Iran in aggregate adds up to a population of Mexicans, Vietnamese, and Iranians that is the largest outside X nation's capital or largest city (Mexico City, Hanoi, or Tehran). In this calculus of social diversity, southern California is the second city in terms of population for an ever-expanding number of nations. Civic authorities tout these statistics regularly. Diaspora, people in motion from Central America, South Asia and, to relatively lesser extent, from other nations in the southern hemisphere north to particular regions in North America and Europe, have transformed population demographics in metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles, Miami, and New York as well as Paris, Berlin, and Rome.³⁰

In Los Angeles, civic leaders understand this to be a point of distinction and to an extent, a point of pride. So we find municipal paeans to a multicultural metropolis ("Los Angeles, where it all comes together") and civic advertisements for "multiculturalism" festooned on banners proclaiming demographic diversity. Read literally these signs tell a story of groups (and individuals) valued equally. Recently, elected officials have generously designated "little" fill-in-the-blank "-towns": Koreatown, Thai Town, and the like (a form of ethnicity on the ground with deep and in some cases disturbing histories).³¹

More telling, in the long run, may be residents' everyday experience of the world in Los Angeles. We might ask what demographic diversity means for civil (collective) society, for individual (and collective) identity, for the connections residents of this city create and sustain with those who reside elsewhere (connections that are economic, cultural, political)?

One way we experience the world in southern California is through consumption such as the clothes we wear, the music we listen to, or the food we eat. In the case of food, globality is represented as a bazaar; Los Angeles is a place where foodstuffs and cuisines from around the world are available. Boosters for a so-called "knowledge economy," such as Joel Kotkin, and those who analyze urban trends and seek out indicators, such as Joel Garreau, see "ethnic" restaurants as an amenity necessary to attract creative professionals and as a sign of creativity, innovation, and a bohemian, that is "exotic," milieu.³²

However, the food we eat is global in another sense; much of what is consumed in Los Angeles is produced elsewhere. Merchants have linked exogenous producers with local consumers in an artifact chain connecting California to South America, Central America, and Asia. Farming, agricultural practices, and export economies in other parts of the world have been and continue to be shaped by the tastes and preferences of consumers in California and the United States more broadly. Farmers and agriculturalists structure their practices to meet the standards of food fashions as well as those set by the federal government. Activists engaged in food security, a movement with deep roots in southern California, have documented the shortcomings in these systems while encouraging greater reliance on local production.³³

This form of exchange, an example of southern California in the world, has a history, one we experience materially at sites such as the Huntington Gardens. There we are guided through a landscape designed to display flora from around the globe. The Huntington Gardens are a living museum, a collector's cabinet of curiosities, a

partial simulacrum of biological ecologies from diverse world regions. We can trace this trade in flora and fauna back to the American conquest, to the mission fathers, and to indigenous culture groups who altered the landscape to enhance supplies of foodstuffs and goods. Over time

The "sprawling," "smog-choked" metropolitan region has become an icon, the great what-not-to-do of twentieth-century urban planning.

"exotics," whether fruit trees or varietal grapes, roses or palms, became associated with place. In this case, the foreign came to be seen as native. Boosters capitalized on the associative. When California Governor George Perkins addressed those assembled at a horticultural fair in 1881 he praised Angelenos who, in a few short years, had "emparadised" (a verb he coined for the occasion) a "sullen" land of "uninviting barrenness." Now "fruits, cereals and flowers" invited the "smile of heaven. . . . On every side, in valley, on hill, the happy results of your labor shows[.] . . . The whole world lies before us here. That fig speaks to us of Syria; that luscious peach recalls to us the fertile land of Persia."³⁴

Perkins's reference to "your" labor invites us to speculate about his audience. Historically, the work of planting, cultivating, harvesting, and preserving the fruits, cereals, and flowers heaven smiled on has been the province of laborers who, like the plants they nurtured, came to southern California from other nations. In that sense also the world lay before Perkins's eyes and the eyes of those who employed first the indigenous, Californio, and Mexican workers, to be followed by the Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and South Asian Indians who came seeking work in the fields of paradise. Their labor, their contribution to the regional economy, their very presence often has been ignored or overlooked in stories about Los Angeles.³⁵

A contemporary example illustrates how Los Angeles and southern California have migrated out into the world. In February 2003 the *New York Times* ran an article filed from Orange County, China. The author describes a gated residential development north of Beijing, adjacent to the site

From the Spanish colonists to the Anglo-American conquest, ideas about California were tropes of modernity.

of the 2008 Olympic Games, a project connected to the capital by a newly completed highway. The designers of this complex were “southern California architects” Bassenian/ Lagoni. “Los Angeles interiors firms” decorated the model units. The siding, tile, lighting, and appliances are imports from the United States. The reporter expressed surprise to find the open plan kitchen with countertop stove, a standard amenity in California, had been abandoned in Orange County, China; it is ill-suited for wok cooking and homebuyers there have constructed lean-tos for outdoor kitchens while relegating the builder’s “kitchen” for show. This tale of two Orange Counties, of California in the world, is just waiting for an ethnography of landscape and everyday practices, of culture and community, much like the work of Herbert Gans or Andrew Ross. Comparative studies of architecture and urbanism in Los Angeles and Beijing or Jakarta or Mexico City would undoubtedly reveal networks and flows of capital and ideas, following the world city thesis. Yet a more challenging and, I suspect, ultimately more indicative type of study might begin with the premise of transnational citizenship and consider how an international trade in design, for example, is transforming cities on both sides of national borders.¹⁶

THINKING THE NEW

What is at stake when we talk about Los Angeles as a world city? Why ought we know what “globalization” means on the ground in a specific local-

ity? What is known, what is overlooked, what is ignored in the (often abstract and universal) stories we tell about a “global economy”? Current stories about the triumph of a service society, this generation’s version of a march of progress, obscure the work of Angelenos employed in apparel, furniture, or the metal trades, for example. Despite the talk of a postindustrial economy Los Angeles continues to be a center for manufacturing. The so-called old economy, the one that clothes, shelters, feeds, and transports Californians has not gone away and much of the manufacturing plant in the region remains in use. When firms that had been producing tires and glass or fabricating steel moved out, light industry moved in. Lost in this transition were skilled and semi-skilled jobs, positions that paid well and included benefits. Whether immigrant or native-born, the labor and everyday pursuits of working-class Angelenos encourage us to rethink tidy, universalizing theories regarding the decline of manufacturing in southern California (and the nation). The world their stories might open up to view would make concrete and particular issues such as workers’ compensation, health care, and a living wage that are often talked about as abstractions. Improving working conditions and living conditions requires careful attention to actual conditions. Such objectives are only good intentions if workers remain outside our field of vision absent agents in a discourse about a service society and post-modern cities.

Or we might consider those booster platitudes proclaiming Los Angeles a “multicultural metropolis.” The banners posted on light standards around the city suggest we have formed a consensus society with accents. In that sense these claims are similar to turn-of-the-twentieth century stories of progress and modernity told as a process of substitution and succession. Through programs of Americanization in the schools and practical training in settlement houses well-meaning reformers believed the Irish, the Russian, the Jew, and the Mexican would become a citizen. Over time, through education and assimilation into a normative culture, the immigrant and the

foreigner would acculturate and their milieu—Ann Street, Boyle Heights, the Plaza—would be brought into the fold of an American city. We have come to think critically of such past claims, in terms of both intent and the implications (both intended and unintended) of success. That history alerts us to the necessity of adopting and applying a similar criticality when assessing current claims.³⁷

Evaluating city stories as a genre and these accounts as narratives with a history underscores their significance for civic discourse and public history; it reveals they are about the present and the future as much as they are about the past. Given this it is beholden on us to consider the stories we tell critically. It also suggests we ought to consider additional or alternative stories as a means toward thinking and creating the new, what Elizabeth Grosz has written of as “futures yet unthought.” Might it be possible to think of Los Angeles and other cities as sites where different people cohabitate rather than as places where people melt into a consensus culture and politics? Are there ways for us to live together, recognizing difference, while insuring that our contrasting traditions, competing claims, contradictory interests, and conflicting passions are maintained and permitted to flourish?³⁸

Those who either have come to know a Los Angeles other than the city presented in myths either through study of its history or from personal history or both might be well positioned to consider why these stories—of Eden and apocalyptic urbanism, sunshine and noir, of progress and a Pacific Century, of suburbs and sprawl—have been so universal in terms of dissemination. Why have they been such powerful shapers of expectations, been so generative of how people imagine the future? Why do these stories remain so resilient in spite of dramatic changes in demographics, in production (labor and the workforce), in the creation and dissemination of contrary images in popular culture; resilient as well in light of a generation of scholarship examining the city in all its richness and complexity? Did those who preceded us have powers of imagina-

tion of a higher order? Did they manage to fix upon some aspects of locality, society, and culture so metonymic that these served then and continue to serve now as useful tropes?

As David Glassberg has shown, the stories we tell provide us with a “vernacular history;” we come to know where we are, when we are, and with whom we are through public memory. Can we imagine new or alternative stories? Might we tell stories that draw upon the increasingly broad and deep histories of Los Angeles and the region, that permit multiple, branching plot lines and that permit us to imagine a more pluralist public memory?³⁹

I will offer two modest examples. At present, the transit discourse in greater Los Angeles, whether the discourse of experts or of an informed public, shuttlecocks between a simple and exclusive dichotomy of personal transit in autos on one hand and public transit along fixed rails on the other. Supporters of light-rail argue for the completion of and extensions to systems now under construction. Detractors and skeptics challenge the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) at every turn. They see an agency entrusted with design, construction, management, and oversight that has bungled each of these. It has spent public money prodigiously and has managed to mismanage and selectively dismantle a bus system that serves hundreds of thousands of low-wage workers and other transit riders daily and that had been one of the best systems in the country. Yet most people endorse plans for creating alternatives to the automobile through public investment in mass transit. The situation is complex, it has a long history, the present costs are mounting, and the future is uncertain.

Obscured in this debate between advocates for private-sector planning with their calls for small government, and supporters of public transit with a singular focus on light rail and Metrolink, are a host of other transit options that ought to be included in the discussions and politicking. Jitneys, on-call van services, collective taxis, smart shuttles, and other public, private, and public-private systems capitalize on existing infrastruc-

ture and available technologies in ways that are innovative, inexpensive, and flexible. These modes of transport have not been part of the story. Might we contribute our voices toward a more inclusive discourse?

In contemporary Los Angeles, D. J. Waldie is one of the more prominent poets of place. In *Holy Land* and other essays, Waldie reveals the extraordinary in the ordinary and casts residents of Lakewood and other putatively marginal localities as protagonists in a story of community-building among people for whom proximity is as much accident as intent. Such stories offer a counterweight to narratives of "forgetting," neglect, continual rounds of creative destruction; to oft-repeated stories of blight, slums, an inner city; to simple descriptions with attendant simple prescriptions. The local knowledge shared through stories of place is complex. These stories reveal context and contingency. They convey the lived experience in processes often talked about as abstractions such as displacement and gentrification. They point to what was absent when, for example, architect-planners Robert Alexander and Richard Neutra surveyed Palo Verde, a Mexican and Mexican-American enclave in Chavez Ravine. In addition to the unpaved streets and pathways, the extended households, and the shared services these well-intentioned designers expected to find (in fact were trained to find) they found a community, a place rich in social capital but poor in economic capital. They were at a loss for words to describe what they saw and rather than talk about a "future yet unthought," they rehearsed familiar narratives about blight and slums, with disastrous consequences for that district's residents.⁴⁰ That event, their failure of imagination and the futility of their disciplinary language, encourage us to do better.

I hope to have suggested why the stories we tell about cities matter and how these shape our understanding, our conception, and our perception of a city: what it has been, what it is now, what it could or ought to be in the future. I hope also to have suggested how we might capitalize on recent scholarship, how that work might serve

as an inspiration and as a basis for a re-imagining of the past as well as the future, how it has given us the possibility to create alternative public histories. Creating futures yet unthought requires us to understand better what we know and how that knowledge has changed (or not) over time. We need to understand how we have come to know the world in order to imagine how else it might be.

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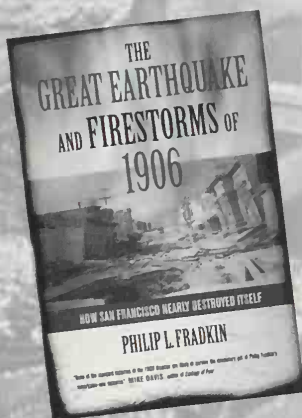
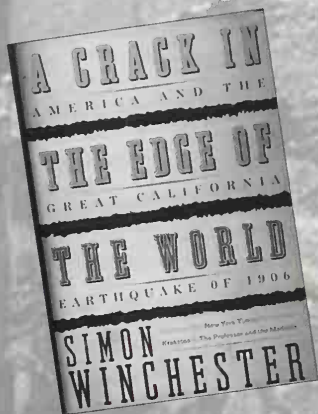
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Sunny Jim in the Boiling Cauldron

The Fatal First Year of the Rolph Administration

BY JAMES WORTHEN

In late 1929 James Rolph, Jr., was nearing the end of an unprecedented fifth term as mayor of San Francisco. He was a flamboyant, charismatic man, whose genuine warmth had made him an icon in the Bay Area and one of the most admired politicians anywhere in the country. Still ambitious, and with nothing left to prove in the city he had raised from the ashes of the Great Earthquake of 1906, Rolph made a fateful decision. He would give up what Will Rogers called his civic hereditary monarchy and enter the race for governor of California. Running on a twenty-year record of municipal accomplishment, he would reach the summit and write the final chapter in a dazzling political career.

Rolph's decision was also influenced by a bitter reality. He was not only broke, but deeply in debt. Once a wealthy shipping executive, he had become overextended when federal authorities cancelled his shipbuilding contract with the French government at the end of World War I, just as the ships were nearing completion. The postwar period brought not only a collapse of the war market in ships but also a depression in the import-export business. The Hind, Rolph Company, the oldest of his several enterprises, went into liquidation. He held off the bondholders until 1923, but then they foreclosed. He later admitted: "In four years, I lost \$7 million."¹

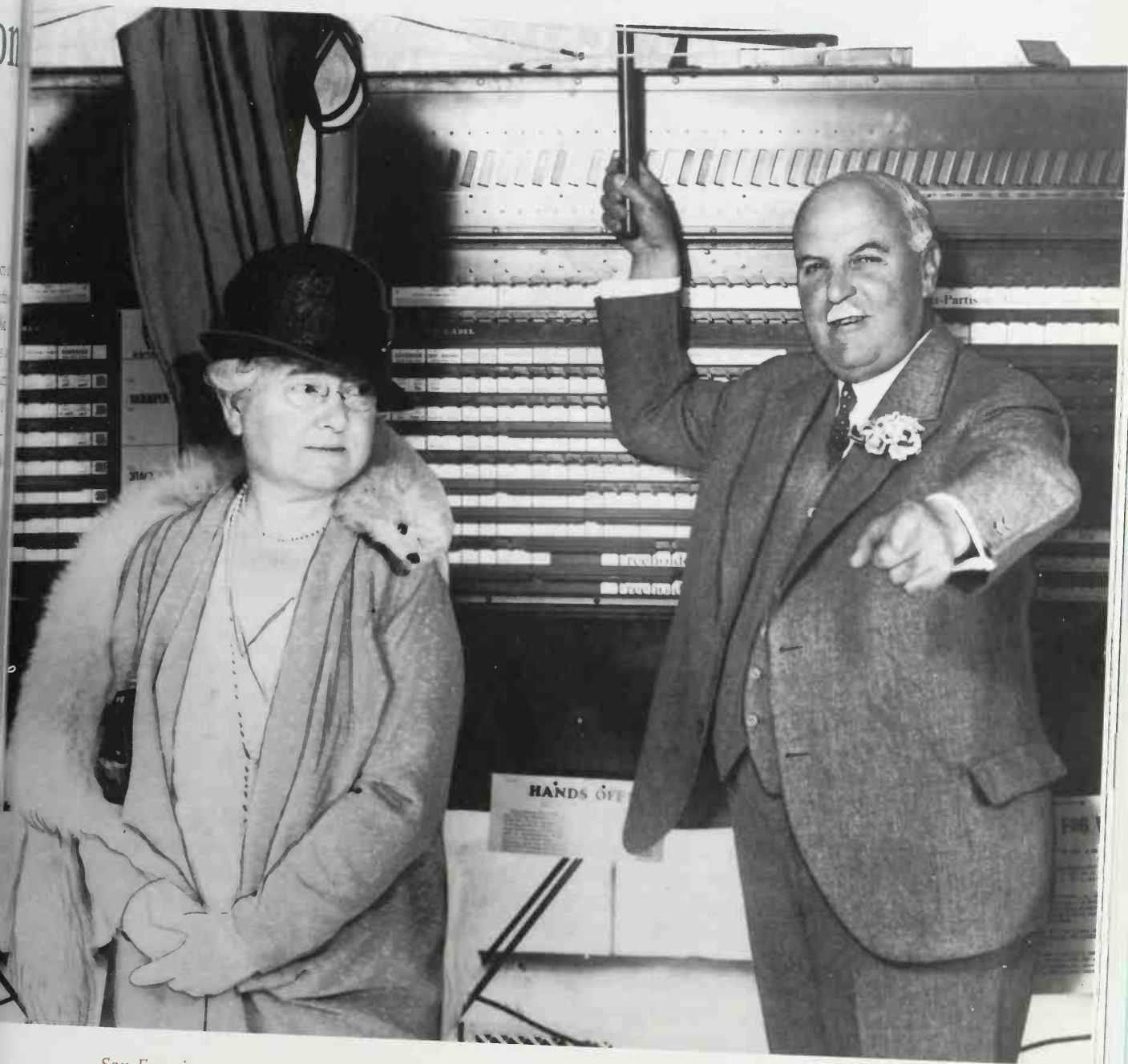
Behind his famously cheerful façade, Rolph was deeply concerned about the future. So was his business partner, George Hind. "I can't seem to forget our troubles," Hind wrote to Rolph in 1929. "I wake up at night and keep thinking about it all and sometimes think what is the use of working and worrying."²

Rolph's options seemed limited. The prospect of a sixth term as mayor did not fill him with enthusiasm. "I want to get out of here," he had told his driver in 1927. "I'd like to get twenty years as mayor, then I'd like to forget it." He could return to the business world, but that course carried considerable risk. He was getting on in years—he turned sixty in August 1929—and the stock market collapsed in October, ushering in a period of economic uncertainty. Leaving public service would mean starting from scratch during a downturn at an advanced age.

Besides, two decades as mayor had accustomed him to the limelight. Becoming governor may have seemed the best way to stay in the public eye, to continue living the kind of life he enjoyed to fulfill his obligations to his family, and to make contacts that would be financially useful in retirement. So he rededicated himself to politics and plunged into the 1930 campaign.

It was a tragic mistake. Four years later, Rolph was a broken man, a victim of his own success. He had won election as governor, but he had miscalculated the magnitude of the challenge in store for him. California was entering the Great Depression, a descent he could only hope to make less difficult, let alone reverse. Little went well during his term of office. His relationships with the state senate and assembly deteriorated, and his chief lieutenants fell into warring cliques. As matters worsened, his health went downhill, until he succumbed to a series of ailments, including a stroke, in June 1934.

The conventional wisdom among historians is that Rolph lacked the experience and breadth of understanding necessary to be governor of Cali-



San Francisco mayor James Rolph and his wife Annie vote in the gubernatorial election of 1930. In hundreds of speeches Rolph mastered what would years later become standard political practice—the calm, smiling repetition of general themes. The election was a triumph of personality politics.

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fornia during a time of crisis. Contemporaries dismissed him as an “amicable Republican knucklehead”⁴ and as having “all the virtues except brains and moral courage.”⁵ Merritt S. Barnes summarized the prevailing consensus: Rolph was “illequipped intellectually, politically and temperamentally to cope with the overwhelmingly complex problems presented by the state’s impending financial collapse.”⁶

Upon taking office, however, he was widely praised as a progressive, pragmatic, and flexible politician. Though nominally a Republican, he was a contradiction—a one-time pillar of the business establishment who treated the private sector with unmistakable deference, but also a bleeding-heart humanitarian, a strong backer of organized labor, and, like the Progressives of the period, a believer in the power of government to get things done. He was a “freewheeling political rarity who made up his own rules as he went along.”⁷ As economic troubles mounted in California, his open-mindedness seemed a good fit for the times.

THE MYSTERY OF HIS FAILURE

Most perplexing about Rolph’s three-year tenure in Sacramento was his inability to bring into play the very qualities that had made him a successful mayor. He had won that job by preaching the importance of harmony and tolerance in a city plagued by sharp social and economic divisions. Between 1911 and 1930 he had managed to “smother partisanship with his hearty conviviality and effusive love”⁸ for San Francisco and had promoted a vision of civic unity based on the pursuit of common goals. Much of his success there was due to his ability to “regulate conflict” among the city’s diverse groups.⁹

Yet, once he was elected governor, he alienated the institution whose support he would most need if his term was to be successful—the state legislature. He seems never to have made a serious attempt to cultivate the leaders of the senate and assembly or to coax them in any particular direction. Partly as a result of this neglect, the senate launched an investigation of his adminis-

tration in 1933 that climaxed when convening lawmakers stepped forward one by one to utter “vitriolic denunciations” of the governor, unrestrained by the presiding officer, Lieutenant Governor Frank Merriam.¹⁰

Of course, Rolph confronted an unprecedented economic crisis—one that would only deepen with time and prove resistant to any policy that the state or national government might pursue. The Great Depression brought to Sacramento a highly stressful political environment, which had a spillover effect on noneconomic issues. Civility was an early victim of the bad times. With good reason, the Sacramento Union called the city a “boiling cauldron” during the early 1930s.¹¹

Though Rolph’s fortunes steadily worsened as his term progressed, the die was cast during the first year in office. This normally surefooted politician made a series of missteps in 1931 from which he was never able to recover. The forces in the state capitol that could have helped him be successful instead looked for ways to defeat or work around him. Why did one of the most charismatic public figures in the state’s history end up estranged and ineffective? Why did his knack for finding common ground and his peerless interpersonal skills desert him when they were most needed?

THE ROLPH MAGIC

Gov. James Rolph was a “beaming, balding man, a little corpulent with advancing age but nonetheless handsome, with blue laughing eyes, a fringe of white hair, and a finely trimmed white mustache, accenting a round, florid face.”¹² He could always be found with a fresh flower in his lapel and custom-made boots on his feet. His ability to touch ordinary lives was one of many qualities that placed him among the most unusual and original American politicians of his—or any—era.

Voters responded not to his ideas or intellect, but to the sheer force of his personality and the generosity of his spirit. As mayor, he hobnobbed with civic leaders by day and then drank with dockworkers by night. He often gave people a lift to

Flush from his 1930 victory, Governor Rolph expected a smooth ride, similar to his twenty successful years at the San Francisco city government. But he miscalculated the magnitude of the challenge in store for him.

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work as he drove along his route to the city hall. He gave away his own money to anyone down on his luck. He was forever being showered with gifts and good wishes. People felt he was just like them—flawed and sometimes wrong but doing his best. Newspapers began to call him “Sunny Jim,” in recognition of his energy, exuberance, and optimism.¹³

Central to Rolph’s appeal was that he was simultaneously aristocratic and democratic. The same man who as mayor of San Francisco presided over the Pan-Pacific International Exposition in 1915, charming visiting world leaders with his sophistication and urbanity, was once late to a lunch in Alturas because he stopped his car en route and talked to a school teacher and her brood in a pouring rain for twenty minutes.¹⁴ The same man who “radiated an imperial aplomb, a regal splendor” in becoming the “monarch” of American mayors¹⁵ regularly received the poor and unfortunate, “men and women without the slightest political influence,” in an attempt to re-

lieve their distress.¹⁶ As *Sunset* magazine wrote in a 1928 profile: “He wears a high hat, but doesn’t have a high-hat manner.”¹⁷

SIGNS OF TROUBLE

But beneath the surface were indications that Mayor Rolph’s strengths would not transfer well into the highly charged and partisan arena of state politics. His “freewheeling” quality, for example, sometimes disguised a lack of conviction, or even a streak of intellectual laziness that made him seem inconsistent and vulnerable to pressure. And his odd brand of nonpartisanship, coupled with his unpredictability, made him an unreliable partner for the Republicans, who dominated the state until the late 1930s.

The best predictor of Rolph’s future problems in Sacramento, however, was his executive style, particularly as it evolved toward the end of his five terms as mayor. By the early 1920s Rolph was no longer the energetic businessman who had



Three California governors—past, present, and future—think their private thoughts at the 1930 inaugural. Rolph, at right with his wife, Annie, prepares to take the oath of office. C. C. Young, center, appears to reflect on his failed reelection campaign. Lieutenant Governor-elect Frank Merriam, with papers, would announce his decision to run for governor in 1934 only a few weeks later.

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burst upon the local political scene in 1911 determined to make San Francisco a world-class city. Having accomplished most of his construction goals during his first term, he marked time thereafter, building on past successes rather than striking out in new directions.

At the same time, he tended to act through others rather than take an active role himself. When he provided strong leadership—as in overseeing the multi-year Hetch Hetchy water project—he was reflecting a public consensus that already existed rather than trying to forge a new one. Increasingly, he was content to facilitate and preside rather than lead. He became, in a positive sense, the “neutral harmonizing force, the vital human amalgam around whom all San Franciscans converged,”¹⁸ but the downside was growing passivity and disengagement.

At first his propensity to delegate did no harm to the public interest, because he took seriously his obligation to make appointments based on merit. At some point, however, his humanity and devotion to his many friends came into conflict with the goal of a merit-based city administration. His warm-heartedness was both his great strength and Achilles heel. While continuing to recruit the city’s “best brains” for leading positions, he rewarded an increasing number of his political supporters with city jobs and other privileges. Such practice was routine during a period when the concept of a professional civil service was in its infancy and “to the winner went the spoils,” but over time Rolph came to value personal loyalty far more than competence. By the late 1920s, he had built a formidable machine that would prove useful if he decided to run for higher office.

As his years as mayor wore on, Rolph seemed to prefer to let others argue policy while he retreated into his “normal role of a genial friend to all mankind who reigns without governing.”¹⁹ Accounts by purported insiders testified to his shaky understanding of municipal problems. “The Rolph grasp of affairs is weak,” confided an associate. “I have seen his attention wander while vainly trying to comprehend a [staff] report.” Little by little, wrote *The New Republic*, Rolph was giving

way to the “surrounding gang behind the scenes, while maintaining, ever more artificially, . . . the papier-mâché front.”²⁰

Along with administrative dependence came something even more dangerous—financial dependence. Rumors surfaced that he was heavily indebted to Herbert Fleishhacker, an influential banker, conservative Republican, and long-time friend. “Everyone knows that he owns our present mayor, body and soul,” said a local official in 1924.²¹ The mayor denied that such largesse affected his political decisions, but doubts about his incorruptibility began to grow.

THE 1930 CAMPAIGN

Few of the mayor’s problems were widely known when he decided in 1929 to run for governor. Even so, he seemed like a long shot. He was the only candidate without experience in Sacramento. The media and his opponents in the Republican primary—the highly regarded incumbent governor, C. C. Young, and Los Angeles District Attorney Buron Fitts—quickly seized on his “woeful knowledge of state affairs” as a campaign issue, realizing the mayor could not be beaten in a personality contest. The *San Diego Union* editorialized that Rolph, “while personally a charming man deservedly popular—can hardly be called a state leader.”²² When Rolph charged that the budget surplus Young had so carefully accumulated over his term should instead have been spent on unemployment relief, Young called the mayor ignorant of economic principles.

But Rolph had learned years ago not to let his opponents trap him into running an issues campaign. He stuck to his tried and true formula for political success—bonding with the voters and avoiding specifics. He “conducted his usual picturesque canvass,”²³ attending fiestas, milking cows, kissing babies, and riding white stallions in civic parades, while decked out in his custom-made boots and fresh gardenia.²⁴ *The Nation* wrote that Rolph’s style suggested the “glamour, the professional geniality, and the circus monkey-shines of modern royalty.”²⁵

Until 1930, personality had not mattered much in state and national elections, because most voters had been unable to see or hear the candidates. Now, radio and newsreels carried an office-seeker's voice and image into thousands of homes and movie theaters, and the airplane and automobile allowed face-to-face interaction with the public on a scale never before possible.

The new technology played to Rolph's strength. He had become a superb campaigner during his many runs for reelection. He and his veteran staff put together a plan to highlight his charisma by maximizing his exposure to the public. They spent heavily on transportation, enabling the candidate to visit every county in the state—an unprecedented feat. The mayor wound up covering twenty-eight thousand miles by chartered airplane; he also traveled in a limousine and often slept in it. He had his own band, which constantly played his personal theme, "Smiles." "It wasn't military," a voter said, "but it had the same effect on you as a war song."²⁶

Along with his edge in showmanship, Rolph drew clear benefit from some of the contest's other dynamics. During a time when the experiment with Prohibition was becoming increasingly unpopular, he was an unabashed "wet," running against two "drys." Buron Fitts positioned himself as the southern California candidate who would expose the "outworn myth of the north's 'preeminent rights' in state affairs." His strong appeal in the Los Angeles area seriously undermined C. C. Young's support there. Young, for all his ability, appeared austere and reserved in public. He also showed an unbecoming sensitivity to criticism, going from "pained resignation, to elaborate sarcasm, to something bordering on extremely bad temper"²⁷ as the campaign progressed.

Rolph's opponents were unable to exploit the negative side of his record in San Francisco—if they even knew about it. Viewed against the mayor's impressive length of service and immense local popularity, perhaps his flaws would have seemed beside the point. In any event, Rolph won the Re-

publican primary, beating Young by twenty thousand votes. With the state Democratic party at its nadir, the general election was a rout. Rolph overwhelmed his opponent by a three-to-one margin. The politics of personality had triumphed.

INTO THE "CAULDRON"

As his entourage rolled into Sacramento in January 1931, brimming with optimism and enthusiasm, the new governor expected a smooth ride ahead—similar to his successful twenty years at the helm of the San Francisco city government. But dark clouds were on the horizon. The economy was sputtering in the aftermath of the stock market crash, people were losing their jobs at an alarming rate, and agitation and discontent, especially among farm workers, were growing by the day.

On January 6, he delivered his inaugural address. It set an appropriately modest tone for a governor with no experience in state politics. Rolph asked for the legislature's help and said that he came to his new tasks with "much diffidence." As befit a man who prized harmony above all else, he also asked for a period of tranquility and tolerance, and counseled against the "ferocity for righteousness which brings about turmoil and strife to no end."²⁸

While acknowledging the seriousness of the current economic situation, he was upbeat about the future. For example, he saw no need to seek additional revenue, though he had outlined a number of new spending priorities. He expressed "justified optimism" that the Depression was coming to an end, that the banking system was sound, and that "business is on the eve of an upswing." In believing this, he was no less farsighted than the national Republican leadership, beginning with President Hoover himself, who had until this point resisted strong Federal action to revive the economy.

Though Rolph's speech was well received, his honeymoon ended quickly. His troubles were to multiply throughout his nearly four years in office, but serious mistakes early in 1931 caused such

dismay among the city's political elite that he was never able to recover. What precipitated the reversal, and why did it happen so fast?

EARLY MISSTEPS

It began with a series of seemingly minor issues that, taken collectively, cast doubt on Rolph's seriousness of purpose. Sober, small-town Sacramento had not seen anything like the three days of inaugural festivities that the governor-elect and his staff had organized. Rolph loved pomp, parades, multi-gun salutes, balls, and ceremony, all of which had been staples of his tenure in the cosmopolitan and lively city by the bay. Now the inaugural ball, which had not been held in the capitol since 1903, was revived.²⁹ But the event raised the eyebrows of local politicians and state bureaucrats. Some grumbled that the times were wrong for such a public display of excess.

Next came an uproar over a body called the Governor's Council. Governor Young had created this council—which was nothing more than a regular meeting between the chief executive and his department heads that allowed an exchange of information and views but which was apparently a novelty at the time. In late January, Rolph let it be known that he had no use for the council and intended to abolish it. The *San Francisco News* criticized the decision, saying that Rolph was nullifying the greatest advance in state government since Hiram Johnson's term.³⁰ Finally, on January 29, the administration announced that it would not disband the council. But it was too late to correct the impression that an inexperienced governor was uninterested in learning more about the operations of his own government.

Far more damaging to Rolph's chances for early success were his moves to reshape the state government bureaucracy in what many observers saw as a blatant attempt to find jobs for his friends. When he assumed the governorship, he noticed that the terms of many state government department heads appointed by Governor Young did not end with Young's departure—in fact, some appointees had been named to their jobs on the eve of the election. Feeling that these "lame ducks"

might try to block his programs, Rolph sponsored legislation that would require all of Young's appointees to step down and future appointees to serve at the pleasure of the governor. He also introduced a government reorganization proposal that would create a number of new department head positions for him to fill.

Announced on January 23, Rolph's plans quickly met strong opposition. Most state officials regarded the department heads as substantive specialists, not political appointees, and sought to protect their freedom of action. Adding to the number of department heads was attacked as a surrender to pressure from job seekers.

At about the same time, Rolph's reputation for integrity came under challenge. New state officials were required to be bonded, or insured for any financial loss they might cause. One of Rolph's companies—Rolph, Landis and Ellis—was in the business of issuing such bonds. In late January, it was learned that the governor had sent out solicitation letters to state officials in need of bonds and that seventeen Rolph appointees had already signed up with the company. The *San Francisco News* charged that Rolph was trying to turn this highly profitable state business into a family bonding monopoly.

On February 1, the *Sacramento Union* reported that the Survey Underwriters of Northern California were investigating the governor for using his position to influence the posting of "surety" bonds. Rolph's letter of solicitation was reprinted in the press, though he quickly denied having seen the letter he signed. He also insisted that he had resigned from the company upon becoming governor, but he admitted that his son was a partner. His own resignation had meant that he had done nothing illegal under then current law, but the incident fueled the perception that Rolph's agenda went beyond serving the public.

Rolph's early missteps were presciently summarized by a *Union* political columnist on February 3. Noting that "troubles are piling up" for the governor after only a month in office, he pointed to

two weaknesses that could spell more trouble ahead: his unfamiliarity with state affairs and his inability to say no. He concluded:

Rolph is a worker and puts in long hours [but] he tries to see everyone and do too much. He must quit trying to tear the state machinery apart to make jobs for friends, who are scarcely worthy of the effort required. He mustn't use his influence to get business for his family or anyone else . . . He must think of the taxpayers and the voters and not the San Francisco gang, which seems to regard his election as a bonanza.³¹

"I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT POLITICS"

To be a successful governor, Rolph also needed a good relationship with the state assembly and senate. As mayor, he had instinctively looked for common ground with the city's board of supervisors, and he had campaigned for governor as a unifier, so he seemed well equipped to launch a charm offensive on the lawmakers. Several days after his inauguration, Rolph seemed to do just that. He visited the legislature and delivered informal addresses to both houses. Among his remarks were:

It is not the purpose of the Governor to interfere with the problems which you have been elected to carry into effect. It is not the purpose of the Governor to interfere with the formation of your committees or to interfere with your work. . . . You have noticed that I have not endeavored in any way, shape or form to interfere, or to show, as has been done in other states and elsewhere, that the Governor's hand is shown in the activities of the Senate or Assembly. . . . You have seen no politics in this administration.³²

Rolph's awkward words were probably intended to show deference, but they raised eyebrows around a town that knew how rancorous and undisciplined the legislature could be. Not only was

the state facing leaner times, thus intensifying the struggle for resources, but hostility between the northern and southern halves of the state was approaching its apogee in a struggle over electoral reapportionment. It seemed to many state leaders that Rolph needed to follow up on the ideas in his inaugural address and give the legislature some direction.

His remarks to the lawmakers provided several important, and largely overlooked, clues about his view of the governorship and himself. He elaborated on his supposed distaste for the political process: "I want every one of you to feel there is no politics in the governor's office," he exclaimed "because I am no politician, and I know nothing about politics." His legacy in San Francisco, he professed, was a limited one. "The only reason that I have succeeded, if I have succeeded, is because I attend to business, because I have something to show the people through public buildings which have been built. The best kind of politics is to do something that the people like us to do."³³ Earlier that day, he had told the assembly the same thing: "I am not a politician but a builder."

Why would the state's most successful politician say he knew nothing about politics? His comments suggest that he was already worried about the prospect for bitter, partisan divisions over policy issues. He seemed to be hoping that he and the legislature could quickly come to agreement about what needed to be done and then he would simply guide these tasks through to completion.

But surely Rolph did not expect to spend his time overseeing building projects. He had been elected to a position with a complex set of policy challenges, all of which—building programs among them—would be controversial and require political give-and-take. He would not be able to preside over a harmonious group of like-minded people. He would not be able to avoid conflict.

Yet right from the start, Rolph seemed determined to do so. One of the most divisive issues before the legislature in 1931 was reapportionment. The lawmakers were meeting in their first

session since the 1930 census, which documented enormous population gains by southern California. A realignment of electoral districts was necessary—one that would shift the political center of gravity from the north to the south—but the north would not yield its advantage without a struggle.

Soon after convening, the assembly split into two hostile camps over the selection of a Speaker. A southern Californian—Walter Little—ran against a San Franciscan—Edgar C. Levey. Rolph took a hands-off attitude toward this fight. Levey emerged the winner, and a *Union* editorial remarked that keeping his distance was “the smart thing for an incoming governor to do.”³⁴

The bitter struggle among the legislators engendered much ill will. As January gave way to February, according to a contemporary analysis, the feelings of resentment and hostility had hardened into permanent estrangements.³⁵ Ultimately, the census data could not be ignored. A bill was passed and sent to the governor in April containing a new redistricting plan that tipped the balance of power southward.

What was Governor Rolph's role in the reapportionment fight? In his inaugural address, he had called the issue a hard question and expressed the naïve hope that the legislature would solve it “without regard to sectional, individual, or party interests.” Once the battle was joined, true to his promise to abjure politics, he refused to get involved. He declared his neutrality in the contest for Speaker, perhaps because neither candidate had supported him in the gubernatorial primary. By the session's first recess, he had taken “no part, certainly no open part” in the search for a solution.³⁶

As positions hardened, many legislators looked to the governor for leadership. But he did not seem to have any clear idea of how to shape a compromise and showed no inclination to interfere with what he felt was a legislative responsibility.³⁷ When the bill was sent to him in April, he quietly accepted the political result and signed



In June 1931 Rolph “barricaded himself behind closed doors” to consider the hundreds of bills passed by a rudderless state legislature. When he emerged, he had signed 1,220 of them.

SACRAMENTO BEE COLLECTION, SACRAMENTO
ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM COLLECTION CENTER



Rolph, second from right, holds a horned lizard at a rodeo in Tucson. The governor enjoyed events that other politicians considered sheer drudgery, and he was always dressed for the occasion. His heavy schedule of extra-curricular activities was controversial from the start. A state senator wise-cracked that Rolph "might be found in his office if there are no circuses in town."

NANCY ROLPH WELCH COLLECTION

it. He then made a gesture to the northerners by supporting an attempt to put the issue before the voters in the form of a referendum, but the effort failed for lack of financial support. Rolph had missed an early chance to make a mark as a conciliator. Even worse, it would be hard to bring members together on the serious issues that lay ahead.

THE LEGISLATURE RUNS WILD

One of the most important of the governor's proclaimed goals was the passage of a budget that would make intelligent use of some of the state's surplus in addressing the unemployment and relief problems. Though hard times seemed to argue for sharply increased spending, political pressure on the administration during 1931 was on the side of reigning it in. A group of legislators, calling themselves the "economy bloc," wanted to slash appropriations for state agencies, which they considered bloated and wasteful.

At the capitol, chaos reigned. In early February, with the assembly and senate in mid-session recess, the legislature was said to be "running wild."³⁸ As it moved toward its mandatory mid-May adjournment date, clashes on the budget and on spending bills grew in intensity. Rolph's policy of not interfering with senate and assembly business left the two bodies without agreed-upon priorities, which encouraged individual legislators to push for their own pork-barrel measures, regardless of the impact on the overall bottom line.

With the session reaching its climax, tensions burst into public view. State Treasurer Charles Johnson, a member of Rolph's own administration, charged that the state was "in the hands of inexperienced men" and called the legislature "the most disorganized I have ever seen." He also attacked Rolland Vandegrift, Rolph's director of finance, for his alleged ignorance of state financial affairs.³⁹ Johnson's assault was widely regarded as motivated by ambition, because the treasurer was said to be preparing his own gubernatorial run in 1934.

But he was right about the legislative session. It adjourned on May 18 in what the *Union* called "wild disorder," with individual senators reportedly sobbing in frustration over the lack of adequate time to carefully consider last-minute legislation.⁴⁰ Many bills were jammed through at the last minute, with senators hardly knowing what they were voting on. All told, the solons engaged in an orgy of bill passing—approving more than 900 measures that were mainly designed to benefit local interests. In sum, according to the *Union*, "the forty-ninth legislature began weakly and ended in a riot."⁴¹

Rolph had until June 19—the end of the "bill-signing period"—to decide which bills to sign and which to veto. The *Union* warned the governor in a May 5 editorial that unless he exercised his veto power, the crush of unnecessary spending bills would reduce the surplus from thirty million to twelve million dollars. Finance Director Vandegrift promised that at least fifteen million dollars would be left when all was said and done, and he spent the next several weeks pressuring Rolph to hold the line. He did not hesitate to protest publicly when the governor seemed ready to sign bills he thought were a waste of money. On June 1 he warned against the mounting cost of government, and on June 8, in a meeting that the *Union* described as stormy, Rolph signed a flood control bill over Vandegrift's objections.

On June 19, Rolph returned from a long trip around the state and, with only a few hours to go in the bill-signing period, "barricaded himself behind closed doors" to consider the hundreds of bills on his desk.⁴² When he emerged, he had signed 1,220 new laws into effect (a record, according to the *Union*) and had vetoed 96 bills. The result of this legislation and of several special appropriations was to reduce the surplus to \$13.2 million—leaving more than Johnson had feared, but considerably less than Vandegrift and other economy-minded officials had hoped.

Drawing down the surplus in this manner was certainly justified by the state of the economy, but unfortunately the spending did not reflect a coherent approach to meeting California's press-

ing needs. Instead, the money was spread scattershot around the state in a process that favored special interests. And because Rolph and his administration still believed that recovery was imminent, they saw no need at this point to consider additional sources of revenue—i.e., new taxes. This unwarranted optimism (which was, in fairness, widely shared) guaranteed that the state would run large deficits before the end of the Rolph's term.

THE PERMANENT CAMPAIGN

Rolph defined his "office" broadly—it was anywhere he happened to be. And that place was not likely to be Sacramento. State officials noticed that he enjoyed attending gatherings past governors would not have thought worth their time. Determined to fulfill a campaign pledge to visit every county in the state during his first year in office (as he had during the campaign itself), he circled the state three times and logged 3,300 miles by plane in October alone.⁴³ Rolph defended his peripatetic behavior by saying that it was the only way to find out what the voters wanted done.

The same week the bonding scandal broke, for example, the governor attended a dinner in Piedmont Wednesday evening and a horse show in Oakland on Thursday. He returned to Sacramento Friday morning, went to San Francisco that afternoon, and was back in Sacramento in time to board a plane to El Centro for the Imperial County Winter Fair. He remained in Los Angeles until Sunday, when he dedicated an Elks lodge building there. On Tuesday he traveled to Glendale to address the chamber of commerce, after which he flew back to the capital. The next week found him at his ranch in the Bay Area, a lunch in Riverside, a flower show in Encinitas, an orange show in San Bernardino, a dedication in Long Beach, and a citrus fair in Sonoma before returning to Sacramento for the reconvening of the legislature on February 24.

From the beginning of his term, Rolph's heavy schedule of travel and extracurricular activities

was controversial. As early as March, a state senator wisecracked that Rolph "might be found in his office if there are no circuses in town."⁴⁴ Columnists, particularly in anti-administration newspapers, suggested that in such parlous times it was unbecoming for Rolph to be flitting hither and yon and enjoying frivolities such as state fairs and building dedications. A governor who makes too many public appearances, said the *Union's* political columnist, soon ceases to be an attraction. "If anyone in California hasn't seen Rolph since he became governor," he concluded, "it isn't the governor's fault."⁴⁵ Such trips were also taxing: upon his return from one in October, he had to spend two weeks in the hospital with a severe cold and physical exhaustion.

The need to be in perpetual motion would become a permanent fixture of the Rolph approach to governing. Rolph loved flying and saw its political advantages. One of his first requests of the legislature was for a private plane. The legislature said no, but Rolph found ways to fly anyhow. Soon the press was referring to him as "California's flying governor."

With Rolph absent so often on missions that other state officials thought trivial, little time remained for building relationships and alliances with key politicians around Sacramento and for communicating his larger purposes, whatever those were. Under these conditions, his decisions and instructions were bound to be rushed and ill-considered. Even worse, the danger grew that state bureaucrats, left with little guidance, would be forced to improvise and would fall into turf battles with other government agencies.

THE SIX-DAY HOLIDAY

In August 1931, with the legislature adjourned and the capital on vacation, an episode took place that illustrated the governor's tendency to act without thinking or consulting others. On the seventh, the Sacramento press announced that he had declared a state holiday—one that would encompass the days between Friday, September 4, which was Admission Day, and Wednesday, September 9, which was Labor Day—so that peo-

ple could attend the state fair without having to worry about going to work. Before anyone could seek clarification, Rolph went off to hunt sagehens with the governor of Nevada. As the *Union* said, "the state pinched its collective self to see if it heard correctly."⁴⁶

By the next day, the banking and retail sectors, which in their declining state could ill afford additional business holidays, had erupted in protest. Many enterprises said they would ignore the proclamation if Rolph followed through with it. The *Union* editorialized that "only governors have time to ramble about the state attending fiestas, beauty shows and whatnot."⁴⁷ People who had to work for a living seemed mostly appalled by the idea.

On August 9, returning to Sacramento from his hunting trip, Rolph backpedaled. Calling the furor a "tempest in a teapot," he announced he was delaying any action on the proposed holiday. At the same time, he defended the idea, pointing out that only two days of work would be lost, since Friday and Wednesday were holidays anyway. In the end, he assured the public he would not sign an act that most people oppose, saying: "I want to be safe and sound and keep my feet on the ground."⁴⁸

Was Rolph serious about the state holiday? His friends argued it was a joke that got out of hand. When the governor was told that Admissions Day and Labor Day were so close together, he was supposed to have said: "Well, why not make holidays of all the intervening days?" and then went off on vacation with a smile on his face.⁴⁹ But it seems more likely that he was attracted to the idea as a way of alleviating public distress and then did not have time to think it through before leaving town.

RETRIEVABLE LOSSES

In a few short months, Rolph's future ability to govern had been seriously compromised. The legislature was learning not to look to him for leadership. The state bureaucracy perceived that

he was more interested in continuing his election campaign than in understanding policy, and that he viewed the civil service as a place to assign ill-qualified political allies. He was developing a reputation for extravagance and excess that was unbecoming during an economic downturn. In short, his commitment to the public welfare was already being questioned. At the end of the summer, Rolph was in a hole he would not be able to dig out of. What had caused things to go so terribly wrong?

One possible explanation, widely accepted today, is that Rolph was simply overwhelmed by his new responsibilities.⁵⁰ But his early mistakes were related more to his approach to the job than to an inability to grasp the issues. He was a hard worker who did not need much sleep, and he apparently thought he could log hundreds of miles during the day and catch up on his job at night. This was a miscalculation on his part, but it does not suggest that he lacked confidence or capacity.

It is closer to the mark to say that he did not worry about things all that much. Moreover, he felt that by putting his sunny disposition on display he could improve the sour public mood. He was a confirmed optimist, who "through civic parades, fair openings and cornerstone layings . . . would rather shed a cheerful light than slay dragons."⁵¹

A more plausible reason for Rolph's disastrous beginning was his inability to transfer his highly personal governing style to Sacramento. He had always preferred to work through a small circle of intimates—loyal men in whom he had complete trust. When he moved to the capital in January 1931 he left behind most of the staff that had served him so well and on whom he had come to depend. Most of these people decided to stay in San Francisco, where salaries were higher and they could be near friends and family.

In Sacramento, Rolph was surrounded by strangers or holdovers from the Young administration. According to his private secretary, the governor did not even know how to use the phone. In this unfamiliar environment, with new and untested

assistants, he tried to handle too many petty details himself. He also lacked a good press secretary, someone who would protect him from the media, as had been done in San Francisco, and would see that positive articles came out to balance the negative ones. The result was an abundance of stories that focused on non-substantive matters, such as his love of ceremony and his controversial practice of sending whiskey to condemned prisoners.⁵² The six-day holiday episode seemed the best example of a botched press operation, in which his half-serious musings were translated by staff into a policy pronouncement.

More than past governors, Rolph needed help in dealing with the legislature and bureaucracy. Being weak on policy details and having few fixed goals for his governorship, he needed people who were skilled in translating his general ideas and beliefs into specific, achievable legislation that would make sense to sympathetic lawmakers. But the people in Sacramento who knew policy could not necessarily be trusted. So he appointed loyalists without qualifications to high state offices, which had a predictably negative effect on career civil servants. The best example of Rolph's refusal to tap the wealth of expertise in Sacramento was his regular reliance on San Francisco cronies, such as attorney and lifelong friend Matt Sullivan, for guidance on the most important issues he faced.⁵³ From the beginning of his term, the governor spent many weekends in San Francisco conferring with his so-called "Kitchen Cabinet," comprised of Sullivan and other intimates.

Rolph came to office at a time when the importance of a career civil service, untainted by political considerations, was becoming recognized. Though as mayor he had paid lip service to the concept, he was never able to let go of the idea that everyone who worked for the state owed personal allegiance to the man at the top. "If there isn't a Rolph man qualified for the job," he once said, "then I'm in favor of abolishing the job."⁵⁴ A certain amount of spoils to loyalists were tolerated during normal times, but as efficiency and economy in government became primary concerns of state

policy, the governor was increasingly seen by other political players as working against the public good.

When he arrived in Sacramento, Rolph was appalled by the partisan rancor he encountered, and he surely missed the adulation that had been his as mayor. Pressures built on every side—from office seekers, from labor unions, from the rich and powerful whose help he needed if he wanted to be reelected in 1934, from the fractious legislature, from the heads of his own departments, from special interest groups. He made uncharacteristic outbursts during press conferences that attested to his frustration.⁵⁵

Rolph seemed to enjoy being governor and tapping the perquisites of office but was less interested in abstract issues and the people who felt passionately about them. His passion was for individual citizens and their problems, which he would have tried to solve one at a time if that had been possible. And because he did not take anything too seriously—a legacy of his life in permissive San Francisco—he found it easy to do the things he enjoyed doing and postpone the rest. He was most proud, as he told an interviewer in mid-1931, of his attempts to put heart into state government, of the fact that "his office has been open to, and his time at the disposal of, all who choose to come."⁵⁶

In the end, Rolph's shaky finances did not seem to have interfered with his performance. The governor had several friends with deep pockets, and they probably ensured that his lifestyle did not suffer during his years in Sacramento. Despite having no travel budget, he somehow found the funds to fly when and where he wanted. If he did accept financial help, it did not mean that he was personally corrupt. He had always been extremely generous with his money, and many people were only too happy to return the favor. Even his political opponents never suggested that the resources placed at his disposal came with strings attached.

The year 1931 would turn out to be the easiest of Rolph's tenure. The full effects of the Depression were yet to be felt, and an atmosphere of perma-



Rolph uses a boot jack. Attired in custom-made leather boots—he was said to own more than forty pair—and with a fresh flower in his lapel, the governor cut quite a figure. Tailors supplied him with four-in-hand ties in a special shade of blue and custom-made soft white shirts with detached collars. He was a “photo editor’s dream.”

CALIFORNIA HISTORY ROOM, CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY,
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

nent crisis had not yet descended on the capital. If Rolph had used his first year wisely, he could have built a foundation for tackling the far more serious challenges that awaited him in 1932 and 1933. But his later actions—always well meaning and sometimes well conceived—evoked more ridicule than respect. When he tried to regain the initiative, he fell instead into irrelevance. Tragically, the period of his life when he should have felt most triumphant and personally fulfilled turned out to be a nightmare from which he could not awaken.

And yet it might have ended happily if he had lived. Despite three difficult, often humiliating years as governor, Rolph continued to be a popular, even loved, figure. To the dismay of his many critics, no credible political opponent had emerged by early 1934, and he seemed to have a good chance for reelection. But bad health ended his bid for a second term. He suffered a stroke in the spring, while undertaking one of his trademark campaign blitzes, and died in June.

The Rolph phenomenon was the first significant manifestation of the power of celebrity and personality in California politics. When asked what they liked about their governor, a surprising number of people expressed pride that Rolph was so well known around the country. He had traveled widely, fraternized with famous people, and kept himself in the public eye. Like a Hollywood star, he photographed well and had a flair for showmanship, in sharp contrast to the wooden and aloof chief executives of past years. Rolph's actions were often dictated by political calculation, but the public saw a genuineness and humanity in him that they could not resist.

Long after his death, voters continued to hunger for the qualities that made Rolph so appealing. Likeability became the subtext whenever Californians stepped into the voting booth. Earl Warren, elected governor three times, was widely admired for his soft-spoken friendliness and devotion to his family. The success of Ronald Reagan's and Arnold Schwarzenegger's gubernatorial campaigns and of George Murphy's run for the sen-

ate in 1964 showed that, in the Golden State, qualifications and experience often matter less than charisma and star quality.

Rolph's difficulties caused Californians to be of two minds about their governor—continuing to view him with affection even as their concerns about his policies mounted. They sensed a “reservoir of good intentions”⁵⁷ behind his occasional naivety and frequent lapses. Unfortunately, his health gave out before those good intentions and his winning personality had a chance to pull him through.

James Worthen has been a senior executive, analyst, and Russian affairs specialist with the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington, D.C. He has degrees from Occidental College, the University of California at Berkeley, and the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. His articles, book reviews, and op-ed pieces have appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Public Manager*, the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, and *Studies in Intelligence*. His first book, *James Rolph and the Great Depression in California*, will be published by McFarland and Company in 2006.

The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906

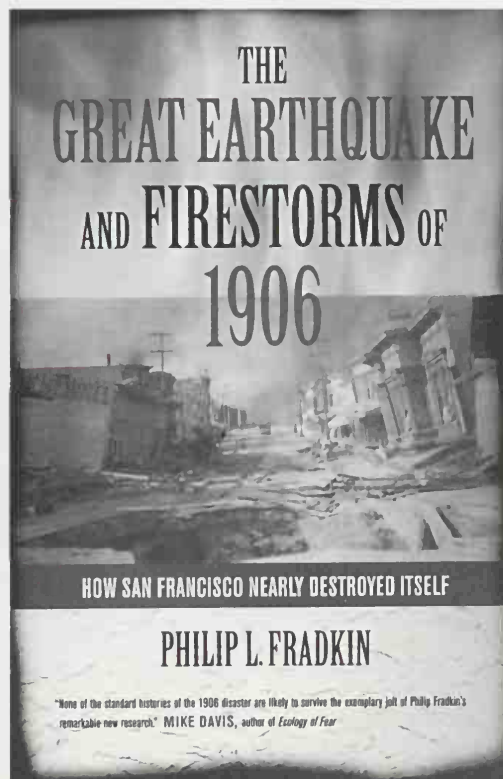
How San Francisco Nearly Destroyed Itself

A Review Essay

BY KEVIN STARR

The Katrina catastrophe has reprised what has fortunately been an infrequent event in our national history: the destruction—outside of wartime, as in the case of Washington, D.C. (1812), Atlanta (1864), and Richmond (1865)—of an American city by natural disaster. Such destruction happened to Chicago in 1871 by fire; to Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in 1889 by flood; to Galveston, Texas, in 1900 by hurricane and flood; and to downtown Baltimore, by fire, in 1904. And now, once again, the destruction of a city through hurricane and flood has happened to New Orleans and, to a lesser extent, to a number of other cities and towns along the Gulf Coast.

At 5:12:05 on the morning of Wednesday, April 18, 1906, the Pacific and the North American plates suddenly sprung over and past each other from nine to twenty-one feet across the 270 miles of the San Andreas Fault. Shockwaves sped across the terrain at seven thousand miles per hour. The first shockwave hit San Francisco (8.3 on the Richter scale or 7.7 on the moment magnitude scale, it would later be estimated) shook the city in two phases for forty-five seconds. Within the hour, there would be seventeen serious aftershocks. City Hall and numerous other uninforced brick buildings, together with many crowded tenements south of Market Street, collapsed instantly. Balconies fell from homes, revealing the furniture within. Less sturdy homes crumpled completely.



By Philip L. Fradkin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2005, 418 pp., \$27.50)



Crack in the Street
Folsom Street, San Francisco
CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FN 26472



Union Square from Post to Powell Streets Before Fire

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TN 5850

In anticipation of the centenary of the destruction of San Francisco in April 1906, the University of California Press turned to environmental historian Philip L. Fradkin, who shared a Pulitzer Prize while on the staff of the *Los Angeles Times* connected to the coverage of the Los Angeles riots of April/May 1992. Not only is Fradkin a respected environmental writer, with a half-dozen books to his credit, he has also covered, on the ground, a major social upheaval that was itself a form of earthquake. Indeed, his current study of the April 1906 San Francisco catastrophe derives its central strength from Fradkin's depiction of the social and political causes and results of this cataclysm. As

bad as the earthquake was a geological fact, Fradkin argues, it was even more catastrophic in the social and political behavior that followed: behavior that had its dynamics in the very DNA code of San Francisco in that era. Just as Katrina revealed the underlying dichotomies and dissonances of New Orleans, so too did the earthquake of April 1906 disclose and exacerbate the social fault lines of San Francisco.

Five years ago, when I was serving as State Librarian for California, the State Library made a three-year grant to the Bancroft Library at the University of

Continued on p. 50



General View of Burned Area from Ferry Tower

From Stereocard: H. White Company

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TN-5880



Examiner Building and Lotta's Fountain
CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TN-5870

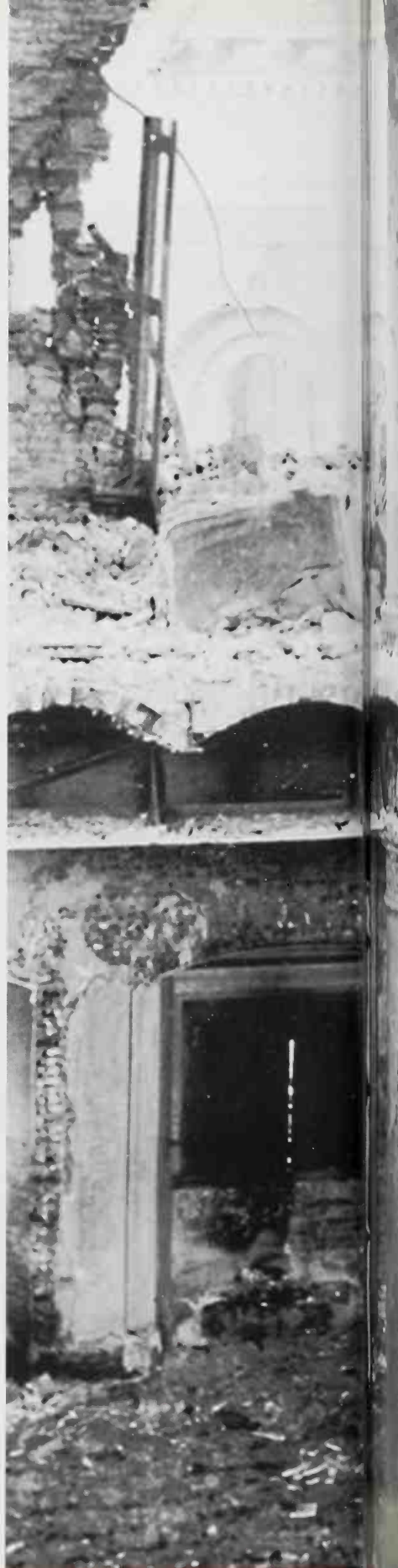
California. The purpose of the grant was to locate every possible primary source—first-hand accounts, official reports, newspaper and magazine articles from the period, later memoirs, business reports, whatever—and to digitize them so that they would be available to the general public by the centennial of the great catastrophe. Philip Fradkin, a widely published historian and environmental writer, was chosen to do this work. The archive he assembled of approximately ten thousand digital images and thirty-five thousand pages of electronic text can now be accessed online at <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/collections>. It is a triumph of archival entrepreneurialism. In the course of gathering these documents across three busy years, Fradkin came up with—nearly one hundred years after the event—the true story of how San Franciscans responded to the challenges of April 1906. Fradkin's history follows the pioneering efforts of former City Archivist Gladys Hansen and retired Fire Chief Emmet Condon in their path-breaking *Denial of Disaster: The Untold Story and Photographs of the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of 1906*, published in 1989 by Cameron and Company.

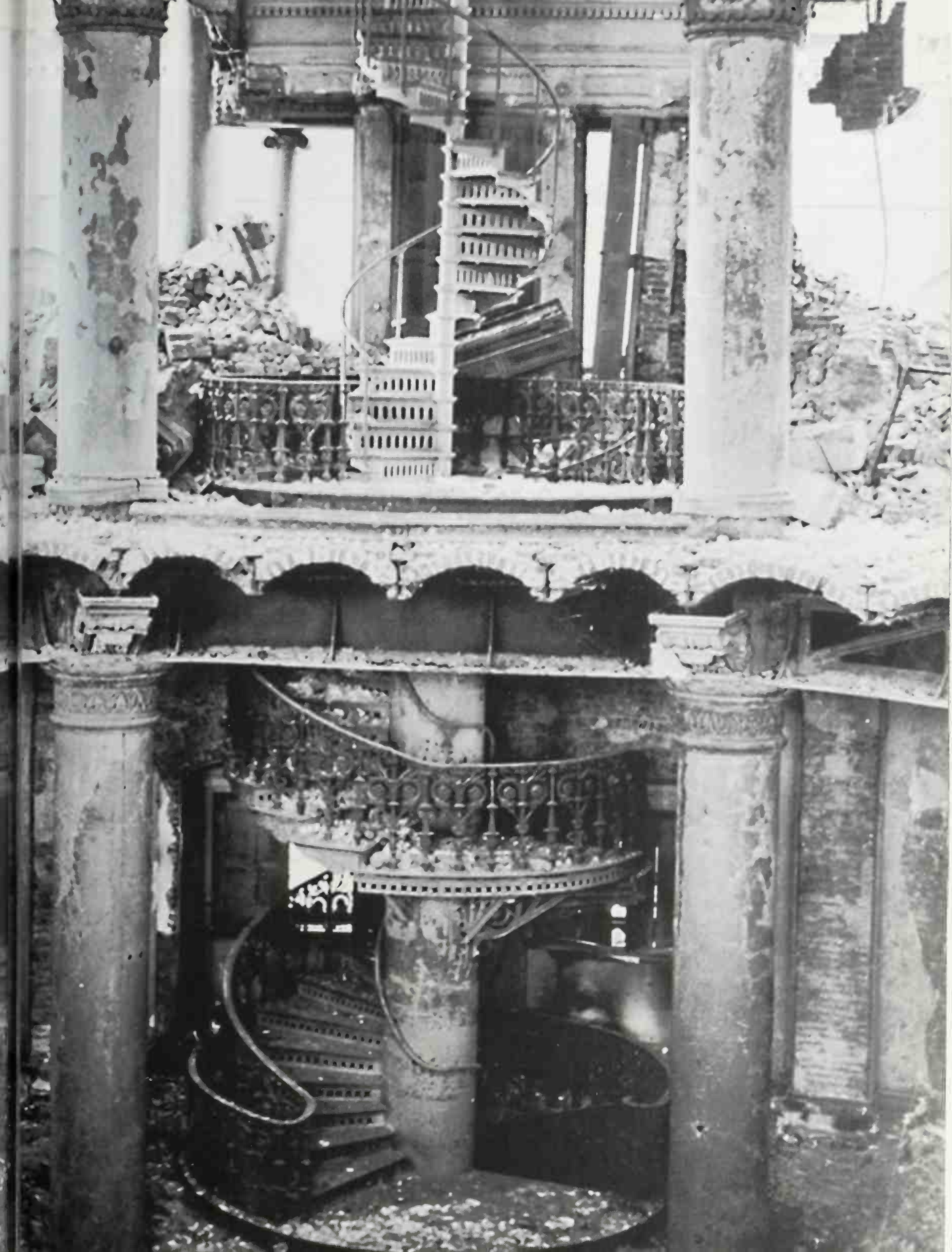
In their history of the earthquake, Hansen and Condon demolished once and for all the notion that only three hundred to four hundred San Franciscans lost their lives in the upheaval. The true figure, they proved through a reexamination of morgue, coroner, and other documents, was closer to three thousand or more. The San Francisco establishment—frightened that the city would never be rebuilt if it was perceived as an intrinsically dangerous place—took great pains to minimize the impact of the catastrophe. Hansen and Condon's thesis was a shocker. It has taken more than a decade, in fact, for their conclusions finally to take hold of the popular account of the catastrophe.

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Majestic Theatre, 1281 Market Street

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FN-28963







*Looking South on Third St. from Market St.
Pillsbury Picture Co.*

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TN-5800



*Blowing up of the Phelan Building
R. J. Waters & Co.*

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TN-5810



Philip Fradkin has some further challenging conclusions for us to ponder. The myth holds that San Franciscans fought the fire effectively, declared martial law because they had to, shot only guilty looters, and in general comported themselves with efficiency and panache. Not true, Fradkin argues, basing himself in a brand new array of primary documents. The entire account of the events of April 1906, Fradkin argues, is more myth than reality.

First of all, there is no evidence whatsoever of wholesale looting. Nor was it the Army that gave the order that looters should be shot on sight. The order was given by Mayor Eugene Schmitz almost spontaneously, despite the absence of evidence that looting was a problem. Many of Schmitz's advisors, in fact, were

shocked by the order. The order to shoot to kill looters had more ominous origins, Fradkin suggests, although he cannot prove this point in its entirety. It came, most likely, from Schmitz's paradigmatic distrust of certain sectors of the population: in particular, minorities and visibly unassimilated immigrants. With the exception of one oligarch shot by a trigger-happy soldier, those who were shot for looting—as far as we can tell—were a relatively small number, hovering around fifteen. This makes us wonder why the order was given in the first place, unless, as is suggested, it sprung from a deep sense of social anxiety on the part of the city establishment represented by Mayor Schmitz. This anxiety also motivated the near folkloric accounts, totally untrue, of human

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ABOVE: *Street Kitchen*

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY FN 26857

FACING PAGE: *Looking Toward the Ferry, from
the South Side of Market near Fremont Street*

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY TN-5760



ABOVE: *Residents of Chinatown*
Oscar Maurer: Photographer

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FN 13248

FACING PAGE: *Grant Avenue from Market Street*
San Francisco, April 23, 1906
T.E. Hecht: Photographer

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TN-5900



nouls roaming the city biting earlobes to secure earrings from corpses or biting off fingers to secure rings.

or was martial law ever declared by General Funston for anyone else. Although the city was flooded with soldiers and militia, and hence seemed to be under martial law, Brigadier General Funston meticulously pointed out a number of times that the mayor was in charge of the city. Funston, operating on his own authority, was making the Army available as a supplementary force to assist the police department. Still, the mayor's shoot-to-kill order, the relative disarray of

the police department, the pervasiveness of uniformed soldiers and militia, supplemented by specially sworn in and heavily armed deputies, gave the impression that the city was under martial law. The willingness to accept that San Francisco was under martial law was itself, like the shoot-to-kill order, a symptom of great social anxiety: of a fear that San Francisco was too unstable to handle its own affairs.

San Francisco, Fradkin argues, was literally burnt to the ground through ineptitude. First, the fire department was almost totally neutralized by burst water

Continued on p. 60



*Looking N.W. from Kohl Building
Bushnell Foto Company*

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Refugees Dining on Franklin Street near Fulton
CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, GN-01404

mains, although the Navy did manage to lay in hoses from the Embarcadero inland. When fire did break out, moreover, the worst possible decisions seem to have been made—to fight fire with fire, to dynamite buildings in an effort to create a firebreak, or failing that, to counter fires that would beat back the advancing holocaust. For two days, San Franciscans seemed determined to destroy their city. Dynamited buildings merely provided convenient fuel for the fire to advance. The black powder that was used to level many buildings actually turned them into Roman candles. Still, the more this technique failed, the more it was employed. The Army even used artillery to level some buildings. The photographs of the devastated city that we all know so well document not a fire out of control, but two fires that were systematically fed across two days by incendiary dynamiting or the laying down of convenient channels across which the firestorms could advance.

Of interest as well: No one seemed to be in charge of the dynamiting. The mayor authorized it, of course, but he lost control of the process as soon as it began. There was no coherent plan of action or ability to stop the dynamiting when it was proving useless. Authority to dynamite dispersed itself through the Army and militia units, fire battalions, even civilian volunteers. It seemed a kind of frenzy, as if San Franciscans were trying to destroy their city, not save it. The Navy, as I say, never bought the dynamiting strategy and saved the Embarcadero. Certain residents of Russian Hill, risking being shot by soldiers for not abandoning their properties, never bought it and saved their houses.

How does Fradkin account for such confusion, for such a lack of coordination? Part of the answer is in the very random nature of catastrophe itself. We cannot expect the San Francisco of 1906 to have on hand an articulated and well-rehearsed emergency plan when such a catastrophe as was unfolding had never even been imagined, much less planned for. But it also must be faced that the San Francisco establishment that was forced to cope with this catastrophe was deeply divided against itself.

On the one side were Mayor Eugene Schmitz and the supervisors of the recently triumphant Union Labor Party, whose lobbyist, advisor, go-between, and occasional bagman was San Francisco lawyer Abraham Ruef. On the other side were the reforming progressives being led by former Mayor James Duval Phelan, crusading *Call* editor Fremont Older, and activist reformer Rudolph Spreckels, and their chief investigator and muscle-man William J. Burns. (This is the same Burns who later founded the Burns Detective Agency.) Burns was a Secret Service man sent out by President Theodore Roosevelt to investigate graft in San Francisco.

President Roosevelt himself must be seen as one of the contending parties, both in terms of his covert support of investigating graft and corruption in San Francisco and his existing anger at the Schmitz administration and school board for its ongoing program to segregate Japanese students in the public schools of the city, which highly upset the Japanese government. In and among these contending forces were many of the oligarchs and businessmen of the city, who had to go along with City Hall if they wished to do business. At the same time they accepted the risks of providing Abe Ruef envelopes stuffed with cash to ensure favorable votes from the board of supervisors, especially in the matter of streetcar franchises and other public utilities-related developments.

The San Francisco that had to cope with the earthquake was in effect in a state of political civil war. Former mayor Phelan and his fellow reformers had formed the Committee of 100, which became a parallel government in the city, especially after Roosevelt made the decision that federal funds would be channeled through it and not through the office of the mayor. As Fradkin points out, here was a city that in 1851, 1856, and 1876 had been seized by vigilante groups dominated by the respectable, bypassing elected government.

The graft trials that followed the catastrophe eventually sent Abraham Ruef to San Quentin. They constitute the grand saga of political reform prior to the pro-

ressive takeover of the state in 1910. Among other things, the prosecutor was shot in court, his assailant was found dead in his cell under mysterious and suspicious circumstances, and the police chief of San Francisco met a watery end in the bay under equally mysterious conditions. In the course of the trials, half of the San Francisco establishment turned on the other half (Fremont Older found it advisable to resign from the Bohemian Club), revealing a network of corporate bribery for which, crusading editor Fremont Older complained, only Ruef seemed willing to take the rap. Of more than 350 indictments handed down, only Ruef was convicted. Affronted by Ruef's solo conviction—while his bribers sank into their leather chairs in their clubs, cigars in hand, whiskeys at the ready—Older reversed course and successfully campaigned for the early parole of the onetime boss.

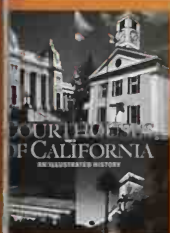
To accept Fradkin's conclusions that much of what we believe about the earthquake is myth does not mean that we have to abandon in its entirety our collective tradition that the majority of ordinary San Franciscans acted with courage, generosity, and panache; and Fradkin documents such good behavior as well. As we anticipate at some future time (and it will come!), let us resolve that we will learn from our mistakes as well as be inspired by our good behavior during those terrible days one hundred years ago when a great city was reduced to rubble and ashes, and human nature revealed its best and worst.

The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906: How San Francisco Nearly Destroyed Itself reviewed by Kevin Starr, University Professor and Professor of History, University of Southern California, and State Librarian Emeritus.

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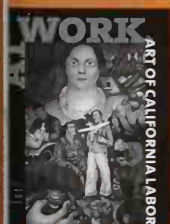
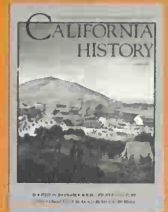
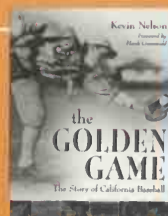
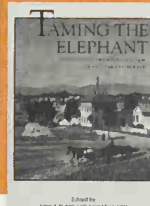
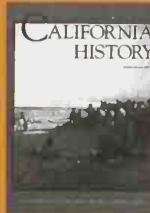
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NOTES

SIXTY STORIES IN SEARCH OF A CITY BY
GREG HISE, PP 8-26

The title for this story is a reference to Sarah Comstock's description of a night-time view from Mt. Wilson looking out upon "Los Angeles and her satellites of sixty towns" in "The Great American Mirror: Reflections from Los Angeles," *Harpers Magazine* (May 1928), 721. William Cronon's "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative," *Journal of American History* 78/4 (March 1992), 1347-1376 has been central for my interpretation. See also Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), 1987. For an examination of city stories see Philip Stevick, *Imagining Philadelphia: Travelers' Views of the City From 1800 to the Present* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996); for their utility (both instrumentally and for analysis) see Christopher Mele, "The Materiality of Urban Discourse: Rational Planning in the Restructuring of the Early Twentieth-Century Ghetto," *Urban Affairs Review* 35/5 (May 2000): 628-648. For California and Los Angeles, the volumes in Kevin Starr's series "Americans and the California Dream," particularly *Material Dreams: Southern California Through the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), are essential.

²See Greg Hise, "Industry and the Landscapes of Social Reform," in Michael J. Dear ed., *From Chicago to L.A.: Making Sense of Urban Theory* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002) for a discussion of industry as an absent presence in social scientific accounts of the modern city.

³Boyle Workman, *The City That Grew, as Told to Caroline Walker* (Los Angeles: Southland Publishing Company, 1936). W.W. Robinson, "Myth-Making in the Los Angeles Area," *Southern California Historical Society Quarterly* XLV (March 1963), 83-94 introduces myth generation in the region but offers little analysis as to why certain myths had less.

“Every July the *Los Angeles Times* publishes a graph of annual rainfall (the season runs from July 1 to June 30). Though the reported annual average from 1877–78 forward is in the order of fifteen inches, the graph reveals that the average is far from the norm. The rainfall total cited for Altadena is from the author’s gauge.

⁵For “balanced progress” see *Los Angeles Times*, 18 Nov. 1923 and like articles in *Southern California Business*, *Los Angeles Realtor*, and similar pro-growth publications. Quote from an editorial in the “Midwinter Edition,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1 Jan. 1905.

⁶Robert M. Fogelson, *The Fragmented Metropolis: Los Angeles, 1850-1930*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.

⁷⁴ "Dahaut-Cilly's Account of California in the Years 1827-28," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 8/1-4, March-Dec. 1929: "A Visit to Los Angeles in 1843: Commodore Thomas ap Catesby Jones' Narrative of his Visit to Governor Micheltorena" (reprinted from the *Southern Vineyard* for May 22, May 29, June 5 and June 12, 1858), *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 17/4 (Dec. 1935), 123-134; quote pp. 131-132.

⁸California State Agricultural Society, *Transactions of the California State Agricultural Society during the Year 1858. Reports of the Visiting Committee* (Sacramento: The Society, 1859).

⁹Benj. F. Taylor, *Between the Gates* (Chicago: S.C. Griggs and Company, 1878), 259-260.

¹⁰George Rice, *Southern California Illustrated* (Los Angeles: G. Rice, 1883); Charles Dudley Warner, *Our Italy* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1891), 109-10.

¹¹ See Anna Deavere Smith, *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (New York: Anchor Books, 1994) and a *Frontline* special report "L.A. is Burning," broadcast April 27, 1993, for analyses that account for a multiplicity of voices and viewpoints.

¹² Author correspondence with Don Parson, January, 28, 1988. The H-Urban review appeared January, 21, 1998. (I have chosen to withhold the name of the respondent.)

¹³Pierce Egan, *Doings in London, or Day and Night Scenes of the Frauds, Frolics, Manners and Depravities of the Metropolis* (London: G. Smeeton, 1828), 3. William C. Baer, *The London Experiment: 100 Years of Growth Control, 1580–1680* (manuscript in author's possession) is a history of these processes for the early modern period.

¹⁴ Richard Longstreth, *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920–1950* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997). On automobility in Southern California see Scott Bottles, *Los Angeles and the Automobile: The Making of the Modern City* (Berkeley: University of

California Press, 1987); Martin Wachs and Margaret Crawford, eds., *The Car and the City: The Automobile, the Built Environment and Daily Urban Life* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992); Matthew Roth, "Whittier Boulevard, Sixth Street Bridge, and the Origins of Transportation Exploitation in East Los Angeles," *Journal of Urban History* 30/5 (July 2004), 729-748. Recent promotion of a "24/7" downtown has been ubiquitous for a decade, see for example "Disney Hall Has a Ripple Effect," *Los Angeles Times* (January 12, 2004).

¹⁵ Megan Garvey, "Welcome Mats Out for Stem Cell Agency," *Los Angeles Times*, (March 19, 2005), A1, 27. Catherine Gerber, *Top 10 Los Angeles: DK Eyewitness Top 10 Travel Guides* (New York: DK Publishing, 2004).

¹⁶For representative municipal biographies see James S. Hittell, *Resources of California: Comprising Agriculture, Mining, Geography, Climate, and Commerce, etc.* (San Francisco: A. Roman & Co., 1863); J. J. Warner, Benjamin Hayes, and J. P. Widney, *An Historical Sketch of Los Angeles County, California* (Los Angeles: Louis Lewin and Co., 1876); *An Illustrated History of Los Angeles County, CA. Containing a History of Los Angeles County from its Earliest Period* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1884); Frank L. Meline, *Los Angeles: The Metropolis of the West; A Vista of the Past, A View of the Present, A Vision of the Future* (Los Angeles: Frank L. Meline, Inc., 1929). For interpretation see Earl Pomeroy, *The Pacific Slope: A History of California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Nevada* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965).

¹⁷For a model analysis of city-hinterland relations see William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991).

¹⁸ For overviews of industrialization and manufacturing see David O. Whitten, ed., *Manufacturing: A Historiographical and Bibliographical Guide* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1990); James S. Olson, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Industrial Revolution in America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002). The relative ranking of California's economy varies with fluctuations in currency markets and the like; the sixth place cited is from an Associated Press report "California Rises to 6th Place on List of Largest Economies," *Los Angeles Times* (Oct. 5, 2000). For manufacturing employment see "California

No. 1 for Manufacturing Jobs, U.S. Census Bureau News Show," *Los Angeles Times* (November 22, 2000).

Touring Bureau Automobile Club of Southern California, *Metropolitan Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Auto Club, 1932); Perley Poore Sheehan, *Hollywood as a World Center* (Hollywood: Hollywood Citizen Press, 1924); "The Discovered City—To All Wonders of Southern California Add Another: Industrial Los Angeles Turns Out More Dollar Product than Pittsburgh," *Fortune* 39, 1949, 76–83, 15, 150, 153–154, 156, 158, 160.

See Charles F. Sabel and Jonathan Zeitlin, eds., *World of Possibilities: Flexibility and Mass Production in Western Industrialization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Philip Scranton, *Endless Novelty: Specialty Production and American Industrialization, 1865–1925* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

For an analysis of these firms in a regional system see Greg Hise, "'Nature's Workshop': Industry and Urban Expansion in Southern California, 1900–1950," *Journal of Historical Geography* 27/1, 2001, 74–92. For practice nationally see Mansel G. Blackford, *A History of Small Business in America*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

Petition to Council, Los Angeles City Archives (LACA), box A-11. See Daniel Johnson, "Pollution and Public Policy at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," in William Deverell and Greg Hise, eds., *Land of Sunshine: An Environmental History of Metropolitan Los Angeles* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005) for an analysis of land use conflicts in the district. See Christine Meisner, "Noisome, Noxious, and Offensive: Pors, Fumes and Stenches in American Towns and Cities," *Historical Geography* 25, 1997, 49–82 and Joel A. Tarr, *The Search for the Ultimate Sink: Urban Pollution in Historical Perspective* (Akron: University of Akron Press, 1996) on urban pollution. Kay Anderson, "The Idea of Chinatown: The Power of Race and Institutional Practice in the Making of a Racial Category," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77 (Dec. 1987), 50–598. For southern California see Greg Hise, "Border City: Race and Social Distance in Los Angeles," *American Quarterly* 56/3 (Sept. 2004), 545–558.

LACA, petitions and protests, box B-8, 16: 5 Dec., 10 Dec., 16 Dec. 1892. The *Los Angeles Express* excerpted letters from a phy-

sician in Pueblo, CO, and the Butte, MT, city clerk in "Smelling Out the Smelters, Two Replies Received to City Council's Inquiry," 10 Dec. 1892: 1. The former praised smelters and steel works except for the occasional "unpleasantness from an aesthetic standpoint," the latter condemned the fumes emitted as "destroy[ers] of all vegetable life . . . as I write the fumes are so thick it is impossible to see clearly across the street."

²⁴ Hise, "'Nature's Workshop.'"

²⁵ Greg Hise and Todd Gish, "City Planning in Los Angeles," in Thomas Sitton, ed., *City Governance in Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Historical Society, forthcoming).

²⁶ Mansel G. Blackford, *The Lost Dream: Businessmen and City Planning on the Pacific Coast, 1890–1920* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1993); Los Angeles Municipal Art Commission, *Report of the Municipal Art Commission (including "The City Beautiful: Suggestions by Charles Mulford Robinson")* (Los Angeles: W. J. Porter, 1909).

²⁷ Don Parson, *Making a Better World: Public Housing, the Red Scare, and the Direction of Modern Los Angeles* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

²⁸ Frederic Jameson, "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," *New Left Review* 1/146 (July–Aug. 1984) [<http://www.newleftreview.net/Issue142.asp?Article=03>]; Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Manuel Castells, *The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring and the Urban-Regional Process* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

²⁹ I am borrowing the phrase from Eric Heikkila and Rafael Pizarro, eds., *Southern California and the World* (Westport: Praeger, 2002).

³⁰ Roger Waldinger, ed., *Strangers at the Gate: New Immigrants in Urban America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Alejandro Portes and Alex Stepick, *City on the Edge: The Transformation of Miami* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Ash Amin, "Ethnicity and the Multicultural City: Living with Diversity," *Environment and Planning A* 34 (2002), 959–980; Ash Amin, Doreen Massey, and Nigel Thrift, *Cities for the Many Not the Few* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2000).

³¹ This practice has parallels with boosters' claims in the first decades of the twentieth century that Los Angeles was a "second Akron" for example, a "fact" that was quantitatively true but less significant materially since the gap between number one and number two dwarfed the distinction between numbers two through five by factors of ten or more. "L.A.'s Newest Place: Thai Town," *Los Angeles Times* (January 29, 2000) and for comparison "Violence, Bias Mark Chinatown's Evolution," *Los Angeles Times* (November 25, 2001).

³² Joel Kotkin, *The New Geography: How the Digital Revolution is Reshaping the American Landscape* (New York: Random House, 2000); Joel Garreau, *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier* (New York: Doubleday, 1991).

³³ Andrew Fisher and Robert Gottlieb, "Community Food Security: Policies for a More Sustainable Food System in the Context of the 1995 Farm Bill and Beyond," Los Angeles: Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, Working Paper No. 11, 1996; Linda Ashman, et al., *Seeds of Change: Strategies for Food Security for the Inner City* (Los Angeles: California Interfaith Hunger Coalition, 1993).

³⁴ Perkins quote from Douglas C. Sackman, "A Garden of Worldly Delights," in Deverell and Hise, eds., *Land of Sunshine*.

³⁵ Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1939); "Citriculture in Southern California," special issue of *California History* 74/1 (1995); Matt Garcia, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Los Angeles, 1900–1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Douglas C. Sackman, *Orange Empire: California and the Fruits of Eden* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

³⁶ "North of Beijing, California Dreams Come True," *New York Times* (Feb. 3, 2003); see also "Welcome to Orange County, China," *Los Angeles Times* (March 9, 2002). Herbert J. Gans, *The Levittowners: Ways of Life and Politics in a New Suburban Community* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967); Andrew Ross, *The Celebration Chronicles: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Property Values in Disney's New Town* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1999).

³⁷ See Hise, "Border City," and Hise, "Industry and the Landscapes of Social Reform."

³⁸ Elizabeth Grosz ed., *Becomings: Explorations in Time, Memory, and Futures* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

³⁹ David Glassberg, *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001). Recent studies of Los Angeles history include William Devereaux, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Douglas Flamm, *Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Josh Sides, *L.A. City Limits: African American Los Angeles from the Great Depression to the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Tom Sitton, *Los Angeles Transformed: Fletcher Bowron's Urban Reform Revival, 1938-1953* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005); Mark H. Wild, *Street Meetings: Multi-Ethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

⁴⁰ D. J. Waldie, *Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996); Dana Cuff, *The Provisional City: Los Angeles Stories of Architecture and Urbanism* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000); Thomas Hines, "Housing, Baseball, and Creeping Socialism: The Battle of Chavez Ravine, 1949-1959," *Journal of Urban History* 8/2 (Feb. 1982): 123-143; Parson, *Making a Better World*.

SUNNY JIM IN THE BOILING CAULDRON BY JAMES WORTHEN, PP 28-44

¹ Elenore Meherin, "Life of Jim Rolph," *San Francisco Call Bulletin* (January 18, 1931).

² James Rolph Papers, 1929 File, California Historical Society, San Francisco.

³ Jerry Flamm, *Hometown San Francisco: Sunny Jim, Phat Willie, and Dave* (San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1994), 46.

⁴ Paul Smith, quoted in Kevin Starr, *Endangered Dreams: The Great Depression in California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 149.

⁵ Duncan Aikman, "California's Sun God," *The Nation* (January 14, 1931), 35.

⁶ Merritt S. Barnes, "James Rolph, Jr.: Master of the Political Winds," *The American West* 15 (November-December 1978), 8.

⁷ Herbert L. Phillips, *Big Wayward Girl: An Informal Political History of California* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), 62.

⁸ William Issel and Robert W. Cherny, *San Francisco, 1865-1932: Politics, Power and Urban Development* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 166.

⁹ Carole E. Hicke, *The 1911 Campaign of James Rolph, Jr., Mayor of All the People* (M.A. thesis, San Francisco State University, June 1978), 81.

¹⁰ *Sacramento Union* (May 13, 1933). Merriam, it must be said, had been openly running for governor since the early days of Rolph's term.

¹¹ *Sacramento Union* (Oct. 18, 1932).

¹² Harry Farrell, *Swift Justice: Murder and Vengeance in a California Town* (New York: St. Martin's, 1992), 17.

¹³ Hicke, *The 1911 Campaign of James Rolph, Jr.*, 16.

¹⁴ *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 3, 1934).

¹⁵ Moses Rischin, "Sunny Jim Rolph: The First 'Mayor of All the People,'" *California Historical Society Quarterly* 53 (Summer 1974), 165.

¹⁶ Tom Bellew, "Life of Rolph," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 20, 1934).

¹⁷ Sidney H. Kessler, "Mayor Jimmy Rolph: An Institution," *Sunset* 50 (June 1928), 54.

¹⁸ Rischin, "Sunny Jim Rolph," 172.

¹⁹ Aikman, "California's Sun God," 35.

²⁰ Ernest Jerome Hopkins, "The Man Who Keeps Mooney in Jail," *The New Republic* (May 11, 1932), 345-346.

²¹ Herman G. Goldbeck, *The Political Career of James Rolph, Jr.: A Preliminary Study* (M.A. thesis, University of California, 1936), 123.

²² Cited in Goldbeck, *The Political Career of James Rolph, Jr.*, 140-141.

²³ Goldbeck, *The Political Career of James Rolph, Jr.*, 138.

²⁴ Rolph's limousine carried a vase filled with flowers to supply his daily fresh boutonniere. (Flamm, *Hometown San Francisco*, 58.)

²⁵ Aikman, "California's Sun God," 35.

²⁶ Flamm, *Hometown San Francisco*, 3.

²⁷ *Los Angeles Times* (August 24, 1930).

²⁸ *Sacramento Union* (January 7, 1931).

²⁹ Bellew, "Life of Rolph," *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 28, 1934).

³⁰ *San Francisco News* (January 27, 1931).

³¹ *Sacramento Union* (February 3, 1931).

³² Rolph address to State Assembly, *Assembly Journal* (January 23, 1931), 484.

³³ Rolph address to Senate, *Senate Journal* (January 23, 1931).

³⁴ *Sacramento Union* (January 6, 1931).

³⁵ Thomas S. Barclay, "Reapportionment in California," *Pacific Historical Review*, June 1936, 110.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 104.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 111.

³⁸ *Sacramento Union* (February 3, 1931).

³⁹ *Sacramento Union* (May 16, 1931).

⁴⁰ *Sacramento Union* (May 18, 1931).

⁴¹ *Sacramento Union* (May 20, 1931).

⁴² *Sacramento Union* (June 20, 1931).

⁴³ *Sacramento Union* (October 27, 1931).

⁴⁴ *Sacramento Union* (March 6, 1931).

⁴⁵ *Sacramento Union* (July 12, 1931).

⁴⁶ *Sacramento Union* (August 7, 1931).

⁴⁷ *Sacramento Union* (August 9, 1931).

⁴⁸ *Sacramento Union* (August 10, 1931).

⁴⁹ *Sacramento Union* (August 14, 1931).

⁵⁰ For example, see Barnes, "Master of the Political Winds," 8.

⁵¹ Aikman, "California's Sun God," 36.

⁵² David Wooster Taylor, *The Life of James Rolph, Jr.* (San Francisco, 1934), 104-106.

⁵³ Sullivan took the lead in presenting recommendations on at least two of the most important matters facing Rolph during his term—the Central Valley water program and the requested pardon of convicted bomber Tom Mooney—as well as on many other lesser ones.

⁵⁴ Barnes, "Master of the Political Winds," 13.

⁵⁵ For example, after only a month in office Rolph attacked a former political ally, the president of the State Board of Health, for blocking an appointment. The charge was disloyalty. "Notwithstanding the long years of friendship existing among our families," Rolph said, "[he] put himself out of the way in the last campaign to bitterly assail me in my candidacy for the office of governor, but I said nothing. If he will just remember, I was elected to the office of governor of California by a million people" (*San Francisco*

ws, February 18, 1931). That same day, he
 ed for an investigation of rumors of an
 anti-administration plot" in the state Depart-
 ment of Agriculture (*Sacramento Union*,
 February 18, 1931).

Sacramento Union (June 21, 1931).

Phillips, *Big Wayward Girl*, 63.

CORRECTIONS

volume 83, no. 2 (2005), on page 37, the fol-
 lowing paragraph is missing from "On a Case-
 l Case Basis: Ethnicity and the Los Angeles
 Courts, 1850-1875," by Paul R. Spitzer:

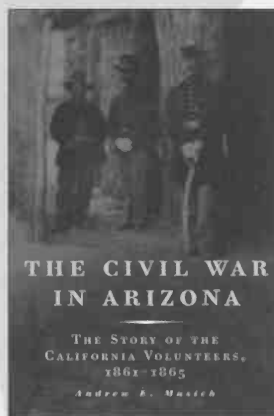
For assaults [see Table 5], there were
 304 cases, 184 of which had known dis-
 positions. Intraethnicity for Europeans
 and Americans was 77 percent, rising
 nearly a quarter after 1865. For Span-
 ish-language surnamed defendants, the
 intraethnicity rate was 68 percent, in-
 creasing a little over 10 percent after
 1865. Interethnicity rates for both groups
 were low: 15 percent for Europeans and
 Americans and 19 percent for Spanish-
 language surnamed. The differential in
 conviction rates [see Table 6] was about
 6 percent between the two groups, al-
 though, for the former, there was a dra-
 matic transformation after 1865. For
 Spanish-language surnamed defendants,
 the rate dropped 13 percent after 1865.

The last lines of tables 2-3, 5, and 7 should read:
 European American defendant/Spanish-lan-
 guage victim." A corrected PDF file of the essay
 may be obtained by contacting Kathy Talley-
 nes at ktalley@lmu.edu.

volume 82, no. 2 (2004), the Japanese paint-
 ing on page 55, in the article "Golden Gate Cast-
 way" by Robert F. Oaks, belongs to the Asian
 Art Museum. The credit line should read: "Gift
 Mrs. Noble T. Biddle, 2001.8. © Asian Art
 Museum of San Francisco. Used by permission."

The editors regret these errors.

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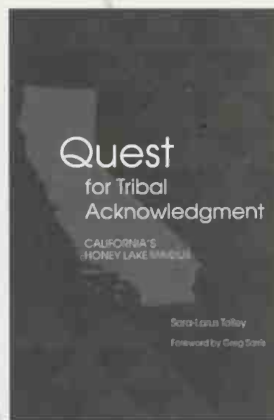


The Civil War in Arizona The Story of the California Volunteers, 1861-1865

By Andrew E. Masich

The Civil War in Arizona is a lively narrative history of the
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Quest for Tribal Acknowledgment California's Honey Lake Maidus

By Sara-Larus Tolley

In *Quest for Tribal Acknowledgment*, Sara-Larus Tolley,
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 Maidus Indians for several years, recounts the small
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REVIEWS

Edited by James J. Rawls

TENDING THE WILD: Native American Knowledge and the Management of Cali- fornia's Natural Resources

By M. Kat Anderson (Berkeley,
University of California Press, 2005,
526 pp., \$50 cloth)

REVIEWED BY KENT G. LIGHTFOOT, PROFES-
SOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

This important book makes three significant points in building a strong case for the crucial role that Native Californians have played in creating, shaping, and maintaining diverse plant communities across the Golden State. First, using a plethora of sources, Anderson documents indigenous land management practices involving intentional burning, irriga-

tion, pruning, sowing, tilling, transplanting, and weeding. Over many centuries of tending the environment to stimulate the growth and prosperity of selected resources for food, medicines, and raw materials, Native Californians created the rich anthropogenic landscapes described by early European colonists. Anderson emphasizes how some plant communities—such as coastal prairies, valley oak savannas, and montane meadows—came to depend on human manipulation for their composition, health, and survival.

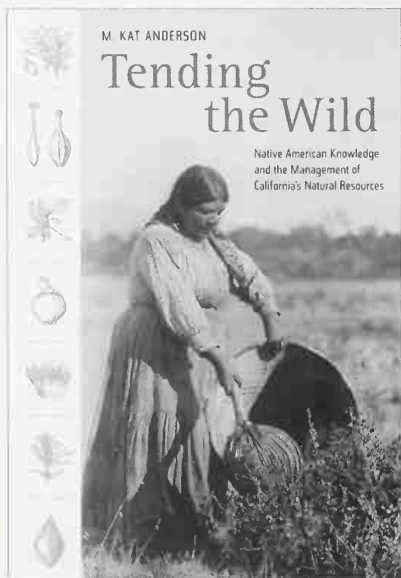
Second, indigenous land management is not dead or forgotten, but remains an important activity in California Indian country. Anderson peppers the book with testimonies of contemporary tribal elders who describe their methods for caring for the landscape. But with the restriction of tribal lands to a tiny fraction of the state, Native people are increasingly experiencing difficulties in gaining access to private and public lands to employ their management skills.

Third, indigenous management practices need to be reintroduced into contemporary ecological restoration projects. In acknowledging that humans have been an integral element of the landscape for at least thirteen thousand years, Anderson argues that we should downplay efforts to restore habitats into some idealized “pristine” condition devoid of human impact. Furthermore, moderate human disturbance (e.g., regular burning, digging) within plant communities may be crucial for the maintenance and expansion of traditional ecological habitats

across the state. She makes a strong argument for the inclusion of indigenous practices in the management of public lands.

The strengths of the book are many. There is a wealth of information on the care and harvesting of various wild plants used for food and basketry materials. The problems facing contemporary Native communities in the implementation of their traditional management practices given pesticides, toxins, and conflicting uses of public lands are outlined. The bibliography is extensive and brings together a wide range of relevant readings in Native American studies, ecology, anthropology, and geography.

There are some shortcomings. Anderson criticizes anthropologists for conceptualizing hunter-gatherers as aimless wanderers living hand-to-mouth; but this model of hunter-gatherers is very much out-of-date. There is now an extensive literature on “complex hunter-gatherers” associated with largely sedentary, village communities. Surprisingly, the book does not address recent archaeological findings for poor health and hardships among some Native communities brought about by periodic food shortages, parasites, endemic diseases, and violence. Some archaeologists see a general trend in which large game and sea mammals decreased markedly in late prehistoric times, the result of resource intensification that had significant and adverse impacts to local environments. This growing corpus of literature, which is part of a broader national debate about the so-called



Ecological Indian" that paints a much darker and less benevolent picture of Native interactions with the environment, is mentioned only in passing in Anderson's book.

In sum, this is a significant book that makes a number of important and provocative points about Native and environmental relationships in California. It should be required reading for any ecologists planning or designing major restoration/projects, along with archaeologists, historians, cultural anthropologists, and tribal scholars.

NATIVE AMERICANS AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE RANCHO PETALUMA

by Stephen W. Silliman (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004, 53 pp., \$39.95 cloth)

REVIEWED BY ALAN ROSENUM, AUTHOR OF GENERAL VALLEJO AND THE ADVENT OF THE AMERICANS

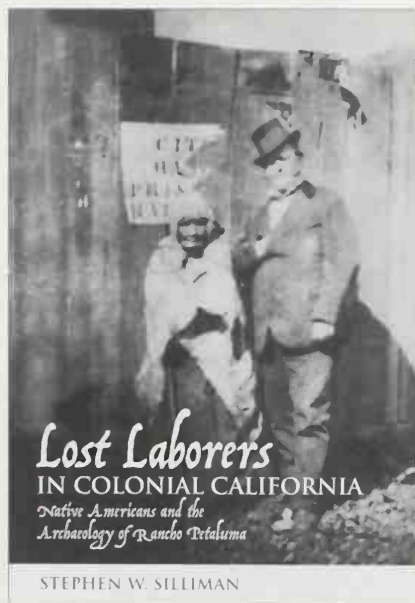
On the cover of Professor Stephen Silliman's *Lost Laborers in Colonial California*, Mariano G. Vallejo (a private citizen, as he liked to be called in those days) stands in the company of an elderly Pomo woman. The pair seem so congenial—it's as though he and she have just signed an agreement drawn up by the general: "You do the work at my rancho (with no pay except for food and clothing), and I'll be the grand seignor, one of the richest men in California."

This facetious suggestion is misleading for many reasons—if only because by 1878, when the photo was taken,

Vallejo was no longer well off; sixteen years earlier he had been divested of his eighty-thousand acre Soscol Rancho by the U.S. Supreme Court. But in the early 1840s, when Rancho Petaluma was in its heyday, few questioned the justice or injustice of the ranchero/laborer set-up that provided so few benefits for Native Americans. No witnesses were willing to tell the laborers' story.

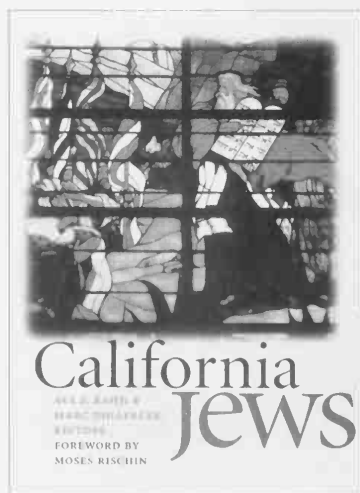
Obviously, the circumstances surrounding certain historic photographs are not always easy to decipher, but Professor Silliman's book, because it relies on hard evidence such as potsherds and bone and mortar fragments, operates on a different plane of reliability. He laments the interpretive difficulties that arise when colo-

nial records of the period, compiled by Californio officials or Americans, are set side by side with Native American material evidence. Archaeological artifacts deposited at a place like Rancho Petaluma help provide a partial solution to what has often been an interpretive dilemma. Producing thousands of blankets, bridles, saddles, spurs and thousands of bushels of barley, wheat, and a host of other agricultural products, six hundred to one thousand Native Americans worked at Vallejo's grand rancho. They derived mainly from the Patwin, Miwok, Pomo, and Wappo tribes, but these workers, to their dismay, found themselves being referred to as Sonoma Indians—an unfortunate way to have their respective cultural heritages neutralized.



Silliman's intelligent spade work regarding the material status of the Natives' lives builds on (while amplifying) the scholarship of Milliken, Cook, Monroy, and Castillo. Professor Edward Castillo predicted years ago that archaeological digs at Rancho Petaluma would prove that Mariano Vallejo, like John Sutter, practiced slavery. Silliman's findings do not support this claim. Rather, Dr. Silliman suggests that "Native Americans were not simply victims of the colonial system; they were active players despite their lack of control over some aspects of their lives." Oscillations between "resistance and accommodation" typified their existence.

A stickler for methodology, Silliman employs a great deal of technical language in this study; however, nothing diminishes the extent to which his diligent research enhances our knowledge of the workers' conditions and status in pre-Conquest Mexican California.



CALIFORNIA JEWS

By Marc Dollinger and Ava F. Kahn, eds. (Waltham, MA and London: Brandeis University Press, 2003, 216 pp., \$34.95)

CALIFORNIA'S ARAB AMERICANS

By Janice Marschner (Sacramento: Coleman Ranch Press, 2003, 160 pp., \$18.95)

REVIEWED BY FERENC M. SZASZ, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Although often at loggerheads elsewhere, both Arabs and Jews seem to agree on California. The deserts, mountains and coastline remind them of their homelands, and the steady growth of population has provided numerous opportunities for economic advancement. Thus, today California houses the second-largest Arab-American and Jewish communities in the nation. As these two pioneering studies show, California history has been broad enough to include both sagas.

Marschner, a non-Arab independent scholar from Sacramento, writes primarily to "promote understanding to replace ignorance and bigotry" (p. 143). In descriptive rather than analytical prose, she presents the stories of prominent Arab Americans in each section of the state. Helpful sidebars on history, religion, foods, etc. round out this study. As Marshcner shows, the composition of the Arab community changed considerably over time. During the nineteenth century, numerous Syrian-Lebanese "back peddlers"—largely from Eastern-rite Christian

background—immigrated to establish family owned businesses. The next major wave of Arab immigration occurred after the creation of Israel and the tragic regional clashes that followed—especially the Six Day War of 1967. This influx included thousands of poor Palestinian refugees as well as a professional class of doctors, academics, and scientists, virtually all Muslim. Today Sacramento reflects this pattern with its six Eastern-rite churches and ten Islamic centers or Mosques. Whether these groups—divided by faith, education, and social class—consider themselves "fellow Arabs" is not precisely clear, but the author believes it to be so.

California Jews consists of sixteen essays by various scholars and is far more analytical than Marschner's study. The themes include such subjects as Jews in the Gold Rush, behind-the-scenes Jewish influence on Hollywood during the 1930s, and the success of Jewish women in politics, among other issues.

Two essays stand out. Steven Windmueller notes how the California Jewish minority traditionally formed alliances with other groups, such as African Americans, to help shape urban politics. Jewish commitment to social activism and public advocacy has long been a staple of California urban life, but Windmueller notes a rising "disengagement" of the Jewish community from contemporary Los Angeles (largely Hispanic) politics and wonders aloud what this means for the future of California ethnic relations. Marc Dollinger is equally provocative in his analysis of the evo-

ution of the 1960s Jewish counter-culture. This movement combined elements of secular liberal activism, Jewish tradition and local California culture to create "one of the most important countercultural movements in American history" (155). Its legacy is much in evidence today.

As they relate these (largely) success stories, the authors all laud California's famed "tolerance." But one wonders if this tolerance did not reflect a "western" emphasis as much as a California one. The Maloof family fortune originated in New Mexico; pioneer Jews held numerous elected offices in Arizona; Rabbi William Friedman served as a thirty-year Denver civic leader, etc. By restricting their accounts to state boundaries, the authors slight this larger regional framework. Still, both books add considerably to our understanding of the complex history of ethnic California.

BEASTS OF THE FIELD: A Narrative History of California Farmworkers, 1769–1913

By Richard Steven Street (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004, 904 pp., \$75 cloth, \$29.95 paper)

PHOTOGRAPHING FARMWORKERS IN CALIFORNIA

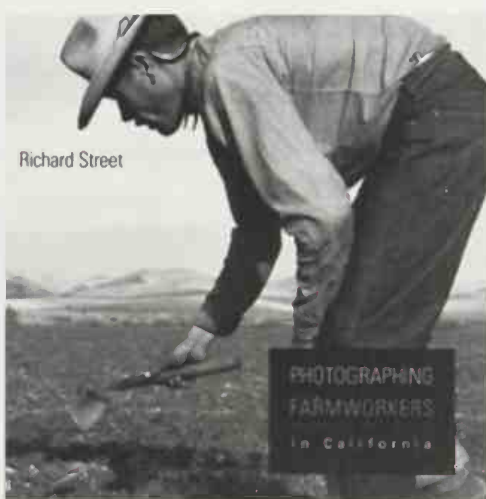
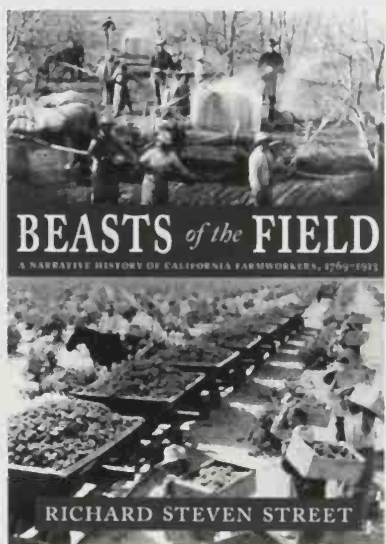
By Richard Steven Street (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004, 329 pp., \$39.95 cloth)

REVIEWED BY ALMA M. GARCIA, PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY, SANTA CLARA, CA

Richard Steven Street has graced the lives of his readers, both academic and the general public, with his two volumes on California farmworkers. His works are different but magnificently complementary.

Beasts of the Field chronicles, in a sweeping historical landscape, the

lives and times of farmworkers who have toiled for generations under the scorching sun, amid stark poverty and glaring social injustices. His meticulous research comes alive with his passionate prose as he documents the march of history from the "bottom up" in the tradition of E. P. Thompson's *The History of the English Working Class*. Bringing the lives of the marginalized into historical focus, *Beasts of the Field* gives the reader an understanding of farmworkers from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century, a group whose blood, sweat, and tears provided American society with its fruits, vegetables, and cotton. Their labor brought inhumane "sweat to their brows," but never made them lose their heroic stoicism nor their dignity. To read Street's narrative history is to realize, or be reminded, that the history of farmworkers in



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California is more than a forgotten chapter or footnote. Street argues successfully and poignantly that California is a metaphor for prosperity. Tragically, this prosperity is one that did not extend to farmworkers upon whose shoulders and aching backs the affluence of the Golden State rested. Street brings into historical focus this marginalized group whose story is one not only of individual perseverance but also of collective political activism that brought violent clashes and confrontations with growers and the law.

Street turns from his role as a journalist and historian to that of his illustrious career as a photojournalist and photo archivist in his *Photographing Farmworkers in California*. His history of California farmworkers brought their struggles from the margin to the center of the historical record. His *Photographing Farmworkers* records lives in beautifully stark, often haunting and at times poetic visual representations. Street has collected familiar and some not so familiar pictures taken over a span of years by such notables as Paul S. Taylor, Tina Modotti, Ansel Adams, George Ballis, Ernest Lowe, and Dorothea Lange. Street's book, which includes his own stunning photography, goes beyond an anthology of photographs of farmworkers; he provides a historical overview and technical commentary at the beginning of every chapter. His introduction to the chapter on Paul Taylor and Dorothea Lange traces their collaboration in the mid-

1930s as they traveled together through the camps in Arizona and California. Street also discusses the photographs from a technical perspective, pointing out such factors selection of composition and use of lighting and shading.

Portraits of farmworkers stare back at the reader, revealing their very souls. We see young children captured outside deteriorating camps with eyes that should be full of life but are almost blank as if they were tragically aware of their present reality and their almost certain future of poverty. Still, we also see a harrowing picture of a young boy defiantly raising a stick against a policeman during the 1933 cotton strike in Corcoran. A teenage girl, her face bloodied during a protest clash with police in the field, reveals a face taut with determination, set in anger but with a touch of fright anticipating the consequences of her arrest. Men and women stare back at the readers with quiet resignation as they bend over to pick grapes, bold resistance as they march to Sacramento to protest their unjust living and working conditions and unwavering determination as they fight for social justice.

Street includes the photographs of the famous, such as Cesar Chávez and Dolores Huerta, whose images capture the strength of the human spirit in the rise to leadership, issuing a clarion call to activism. *Photographing Farmworkers in California* also includes "everyday people," farmworkers whose names may be forever lost but

whose images remain in our memory. A young woman washes her hair. A young man sits on the ground against a tree strumming his guitar as he takes a break from picketing. A child sits on top of the family car gazing across the field where his parents and others are working. These are scenes like those captured by author Francisco Jimenez in his autobiography, *The Circuit*, the story of his own life in a family of farmworkers.

Other photographs move the reader's eye—ranging from up-close, intimate portraits of farmworkers to wide expanses of mesmerizing landscapes of fields that seem to reach to the far horizon, to rows of farmworkers' tents that appear as surreal specks on a vast canvas where those farmworkers gathering along side them all but disappear like small pebbles into the ground. Stevens also includes photographs of farmworkers in struggle as they gather en masse to listen to Chávez or Huerta and as they gather to picket or engage in nonviolent protests. Taken together as a whole, the photographs bring to light and sight the complexities of the lives and worlds of California's farmworkers. They struggle for their humanity, contest injustices and work to build a better future for their children.

Street's two volumes are much more than a collection of historical records and photographs; they stand as a testament to the strength and tenacity of the human spirit to soar even under conditions of inhumanity.

BOUND FOR FREEDOM: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America

by Douglas Flamming (Berkeley:
University of California Press, 2005,
67 pp., \$29.95)

REVIEWED BY DOUGLAS HENRY DANIELS,
PROFESSOR OF BLACK STUDIES AND HISTO-
RY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BAR-
BARA

This is perhaps the first comprehensive social history of African Americans in Los Angeles. It is based on an impressive amount of extensive research in city and university archives and the federal census, and utilizes the numerous oral histories of the Black residents and, of course, Black newspapers and other such documents from the community.

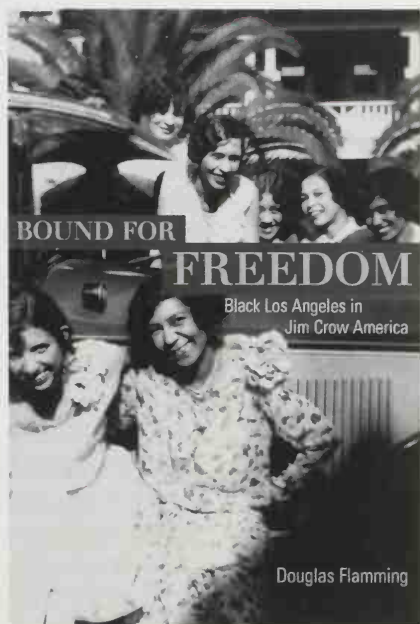
Flamming's main contention is that both optimists and the pessimists were correct—Los Angeles was over the years an increasingly good place for Black urbanites, but at the same time, and paradoxically, race relations worsened at precisely the time when the African American population expanded exponentially after the World War. The major issue that they faced was whether “black [residents’] faith in a West of greater equality and opportunity seemed suddenly [in the 1920s] to have been a false one” (p. 200).

Flamming examines the community leaders and organizations active in the city’s history as much as the documentation permits. He rightly starts with the Afro-Mexican founders late

in the eighteenth century, and mentions the California governor, Pio Pico, but his analysis focuses mainly on city-dwellers of modern Los Angeles. The struggles and triumphs of the pioneers Biddy Mason and the Owens, and of Joe and Charlotta Bass, and the formation of churches, businesses, and political and civil rights organizations are detailed.

Flamming also identifies the relatively integrated neighborhoods where African Americans resided, how restrictive covenants kept them hemmed in along Central Avenue, and how this changed over time. In analyzing the Blacks activists’ responses to the discriminatory policies of the local supervisors of New Deal projects in Los Angeles and California generally, he covers new ground.

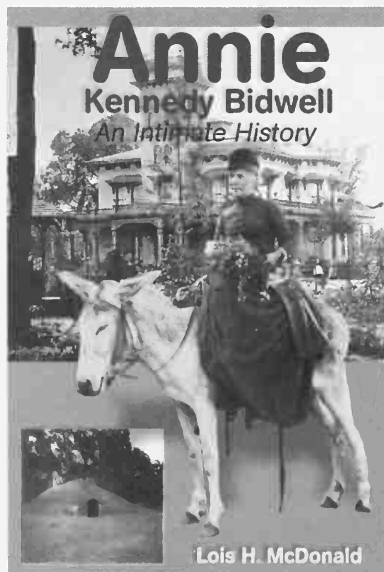
Flamming fills an extensive gap in the history of Black city-dwellers in the West. Yet he rarely refers to the studies of Black residents in San Francisco, the East Bay, and Seattle—research that started appearing twenty-five years ago. Curiously, Bruce Tyler’s work on the Black community is not even mentioned. He also overlooks the contributions of the Spikes and Mosby brothers, and what St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton referred to as the “shadies” engaged in illegal activities. Despite an extensive analysis of institutional life, Flamming neglects the influential Prince Hall Masons and the Order of the Eastern Star. Some will consider the work anecdotal and too much focused on unending factional fights among Black politicians and activists. This reviewer regretted that there is no in-depth analysis



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of the demographics—not simply residents' numbers, occupations, and geographic origins, but sex and age ratios, family structure, the proportion of married, widowed, and single residents, and how these variables changed.

More attention could have been devoted to the distinctive film and entertainment industries, and Blacks' roles within them. Finally, many historians will be surprised to learn that the Ku Klux Klan was crushed in the South late in the nineteenth century. Despite these shortcomings, this is an excellent analysis of not only the Black residents' experiences, but also of the persistent attempts of white Angelenos to victimize and deprive these citizens of the opportunities offered by the city.



ANNIE KENNEDY BIDWELL: An Intimate History

By Lois H. McDonald (Chico: Stansbury Publishing, 2004, 430 pp., \$4495, cloth)

REVIEWED BY PAMELA HERR, AUTHOR OF JESSIE BENTON FRÉMONT, AND COEDITOR WITH MARY LEE SPENCE OF THE LETTERS OF JESSIE BENTON FRÉMONT

A telling 1868 photograph of Annie Bidwell in the outfit she would wear on her wedding voyage to California shows a petite woman engulfed in layers of fabric—an elaborate confection of hoops and flounces—absurdly impractical for the long journey ahead. As biographer Lois H. McDonald demonstrates, Annie Bidwell would bring not only her Victorian wardrobe to her new life in California, but also the reforming zeal and moral certitude of late nineteenth-century middle-class America.

Born in rural Pennsylvania in 1839, Annie Bidwell was raised in Washington, D.C., where her father was director of the U.S. Census. Bright and serious-minded, at fifteen she experienced a religious awakening that would influence her for the rest of her life. At about the same time, the alcoholism of a beloved brother turned her into a strong advocate of temperance.

When she married John Bidwell, a wealthy Chico, California, congressman and rancher twenty years her senior, she became, as her father put it, “the center of a little principality,” which included a twenty-seven-room mansion surrounded by a large working ranch and a Mechoopda Indian

village. The Bidwell marriage was a happy one, McDonald concludes; their correspondence reveals an enduring devotion. However, working from suggestive but not conclusive evidence, principally oral testimony from ranch Indians, McDonald believes that during John Bidwell’s long bachelorhood, he had “liaisons with at least two Indian women” and fathered several children. Moreover, one of the women, Bidwell’s longtime housekeeper, as well as the children, still lived at the ranch when Annie arrived. Before the Bidwell marriage, McDonald conjectures, John had confessed the situation to Annie, and her acceptance of his past sealed their bond.

When she could not have children herself, Annie turned her energy to such causes as women’s suffrage, temperance, conservation and, most importantly, charitable work among the Mechoopda. Intolerant of their culture, she believed that betterment lay in assimilation, the adoption of Christianity and middle-class values. She first set up a sewing circle for Indian women (supplying them with patterns for Victorian dresses), and a school for the children where English and the Bible were emphasized. For Annie, it was a heart-warming experience. “My school almost makes me weep with joy,” she said. Eventually the Bidwells built a chapel, where Annie often conducted the services. Though some Indians remained resentful of her activities, John Bidwell’s former housekeeper and at least one of the children became devoted followers.

basing her work mainly on the Bidwells' extensive diaries and correspondence, with little reference to recent scholarship on late nineteenth-century women reformers or California white-Indian relations, McDonald has written a discursive yet sympathetic and clear-eyed biography of a complex woman, whose "rigid goals" worked against her genuine charitable impulses. The volume is especially good on Annie's troubled eastern family and on the Bidwells' prickly relations with the townspeople of Chico. Ironically, McDonald concludes, this evangelist from Victorian America may have forged "truer bonds of friendship . . . with members of the Mechoopda tribe" than with the residents of Chico.

ORANGE EMPIRE: California and the Fruits of Eden

By Douglas Cazaux Sackman
Berkeley, University of California
Press, 2005, 386 pp., \$45 cloth)

REVIEWED BY THOMAS P. "PAT" JACOBSEN,
GRILITHOLOGIST AND FRUIT-CRATE LABEL
HISTORIAN, WEIMAR, CA.

Orange Empire goes well beyond a scholarly presentation of facts and figures about the rise and fall of one of California's mightiest and longest-lived institutions; it is a personalized and penetrating survey of California's citrus industry from the Mexican period to the present. It views agricultural "success" first through the lens of the commercialized glamour of the California Dream. It then peels

back the story, layer upon layer, to reveal the underside of corporate-scale agricultural development. As Douglas Cazaux Sackman makes clear, agricultural success in California came at the expense of the land, farm labor, and other natural and human resources.

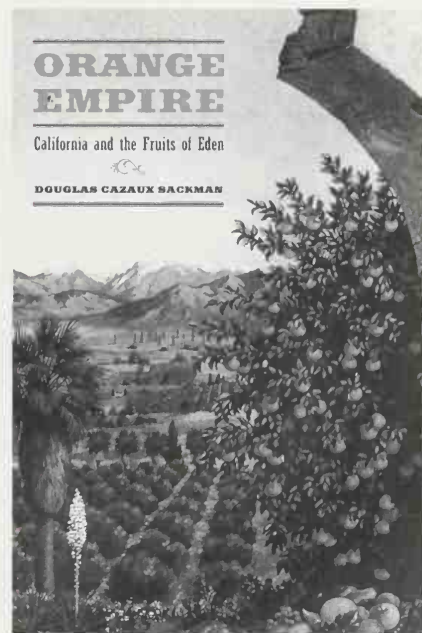
The author opens with a vision of California's citrus industry as seen through the bucolic images found on fruit crate labels, promotional publications, point-of-sale displays in the East, and railroad advertising campaigns. Miles upon miles of sun-drenched groves, purple snow-capped mountains, alabaster-skinned women hand-picking luscious fruit from the cornucopia of California's agricultural Eden, fall away as the truth behind the industry that promoted these images comes into brilliant focus.

Douglas Sackman's portrait of the industry includes the challenges of the land, irrigation, insects, genetics, chemicals, and mechanization in the fields. It also includes the toils of farm laborers through the decades, including their mercilessly thwarted attempts at unionization. Boiled away in this literary crucible are the myths of California's idyllic advertising imagery and the slogans of Sunkist's corporate advertising claims, leaving the harsh realities of a century of brutally evolved mechanized corporate farming and its manipulation of the public's perceptions.

Sackman's passionate dedication to his subject is clear, as he works to dispel the myths portrayed in the advertising imagery of the past century; yet he also draws a parallel between myth and reality, leaving room for both to

coexist. While it's true that a label with a pretty girl would sell oranges in the East; it's also true that farm laborers and packing-house women, ever-bending their arthritic fingers, would have had no jobs without the orange growers. Colorful brochures belloyed claims of prosperity, urging newcomers to journey to California, yet in the Dust Bowl years of the 1930s, thousands of tons of fresh oranges were destroyed before the eyes of starving immigrants because Sunkist "couldn't make a dime from them."

If millions of crates of oranges, lemons and grapefruits left California annually for half a century, then billions of labels carried the idyllic images to



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consumers worldwide. The images had a simple job: to portray the allure of citrus products and to motivate the consumer to buy. *Orange Empire* offers the reader the chance to climb inside these images and visit the groves, the workers, and the packing houses, and to meet the growers, the corporations and the advertisers. If the images were the window by which the product could be seen, then Douglas Cazaux Sackman's book is the window by which the citrus industry itself may be seen.

This reviewer is a twenty-eight-year veteran historian of California label art, lithography, and agricultural advertising. *Orange Empire* will remain a key reference in my library, and I enthusiastically recommend it.

THE MAN FROM THE RIO GRANDE: A Biography of Harry Love, Leader of the California Rangers Who Tracked Down Joaquín Murrieta

By William B. Secrest (Spokane, WA: Arthur H. Clark Company, 2005, 303 pp., \$34.50 cloth)

REVIEWED BY DAVID J. LANGUM, SR., RESEARCH PROFESSOR OF LAW, SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

This first book-length treatment of Harry Love provides much to admire and much to question.

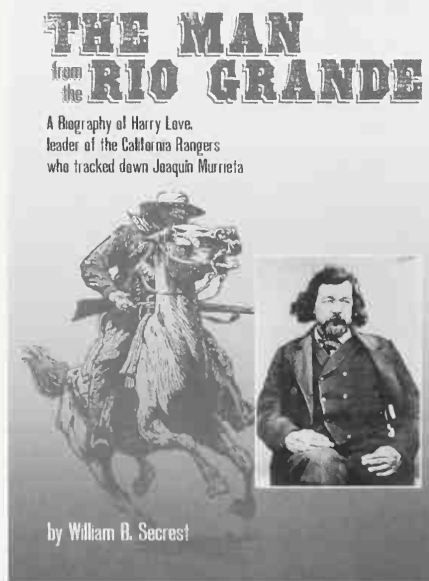
Most readers of California history know Harry Love only as a shadowy figure who, coming out of nowhere, organized the California Rangers. Love and the Rangers captured and killed Joaquín Murrieta, the famous Mexican bandit, collected a handsome reward from a grateful California legislature, and then slipped back into obscurity. Those who have read more deeply in the state's history also know of Harry Love because of his later marriage to the widow Mary Bennett, a notorious hellion of Santa Clara and the Santa Cruz Mountains. The bitter acrimony of that marriage eventually led to Harry Love's death. However, even these readers are for the most part unfamiliar with Harry Love's character and personality, let alone his career before he arrived in California.

The best feature of this book is the information it provides about Love's background and the context to his life in California. Love was born in Vermont in 1810, worked as a sailor and keelboatman, drifted across the south and west, and settled in Mobile, Alabama, where he joined a regiment of

Alabama volunteers in the Mexican War. He worked as a daring and reliable courier during the war, and garnered considerable local fame in Texas. He continued to work for the army after the war, but left for California in late 1850. Love and his California Rangers were commissioned by the state legislature, and he tracked down and killed Joaquín Murrieta in the summer of 1853. After Love bought a lumber mill in the Santa Cruz Mountains, he met and then married Mary Bennett, the owner of an adjoining property, on May 31, 1854. Following considerable discord and separations, Bennett built her own house and hired a handyman-bodyguard. Harry Love died on June 29, 1868, as a consequence of a shootout with his wife's bodyguard.

The author renders a distinct service to history by providing details of Love's life and career beyond the California Rangers and his tempestuous marriage. He fleshes out an otherwise mysterious figure. When it comes to evaluating Love's character and motivations, Secrest paints a rosy picture. In the absence of other historical writings about Love, our only method of evaluating the author's conclusions is to look at other evidence of his balance and accuracy. In this regard, there are questions.

The author necessarily discusses the historical controversy over whether Murrieta was a real figure or a social myth that encompassed many of the so-called social bandits of the 1850s who had the name Joaquín. (pp. 13-14) Secrest comes down on the side of



reality of Joaquín Murrieta, an understandable position because of the implications the contrary would have for Love. Secrest's position is fair enough, and much modern historiography supports this "real person" position. However, in tracing the history of the "real person" viewpoint, the author implies that this is the modern position. That overlooks the fact that there still is controversy as some modern historians have adopted the social myth" view of Joaquín Murrieta.

At times the author uses evidence with very little discrimination. He sometimes offers nineteenth-century

county histories or family oral traditions spanning several generations as evidence without qualification or discussion of their reliability. This reviewer knows very little about Harry Love, and really almost no one else does either except for William B. Secrest. We have to take his word for much of his scholarship and judgment, and it is troubling that some other things Secrest states are wrong. For example, in his biographical sketch of Mary Bennett, Secrest writes that her two land grants from Governor Pío Pico were originally acquired by her first husband Vardamon under

the assumed name of Narciso. (p. 178) That is incorrect, and the evidence he cites for that proposition pales in value against the Land Commission records, letters from the American consul Thomas Larkin prior to the land grant advising that the title be taken in the name of Winston, her oldest son, and a later deed from son to mother in the American period. There are other errors.

While concerns for accuracy and balance remain, Secrest has done a wonderful job in opening up the life of a man who has heretofore been in the shadows.

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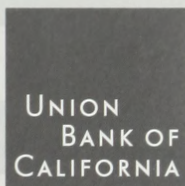
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The men in the photograph are listed but not identified as Pedro Romero, Bayard Thayer, Choreta Cota, Frank Stoddard, Joe Carmen, Pierre Lorillard, Herado Gutierrez, Dick McCreery, Hermie Surjes, Joe Bravo, and Housto.

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*A sentry guards a safe in the ruins of a building destroyed by the
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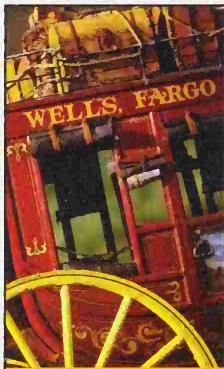
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ON THE COVER

Ronald Reagan and Mrs. Reagan at the victory cele-
bration for California governor at the Biltmore Hotel
in Los Angeles, California, November 8, 1966.

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A quarterly journal published by CHS since 1922, *California History* features articles by leading scholars and writers focusing on the heritage of California and the West from pre-Columbian to modern times. Illustrated articles, pictorial essays, and book reviews examine the ongoing dialogue between the past and the present. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.

The Board of Trustees of the Society is pleased to announce the appointment of David Grosson, formerly president and CEO of History San Jose as the new executive director of the California Historical Society. Stephen Becker, the Society's executive director since 2001, is retiring after 33 years of service to museums and cultural organizations.

FROM THE EDITOR

FIG AND FOG HYPNOSIS

Back in the early seventies I lived in Fresno for five years—five long years that seemed more like fifty. The dense, lush heaviness of the fig trees that bordered the Fresno State campus—with their huge leaves, knotted branches, and abundant fruit—cast a hypnotic haze. Those particular orchards are gone to development now but elsewhere in the county, figs still rule. Most of the nation's supply comes from Fresno, along with 85 percent of the raisins, and annually, millions of pounds of tree fruits. Crops are the main contenders in Fresno, even with twice as many people as there were three decades ago. Twelve percent of the Valley's population lives in the city of Fresno, and the county is the tenth largest in the state, the ninth fastest growing. But when I was there, figs had a greater presence than people—or at least it seemed that way to me.

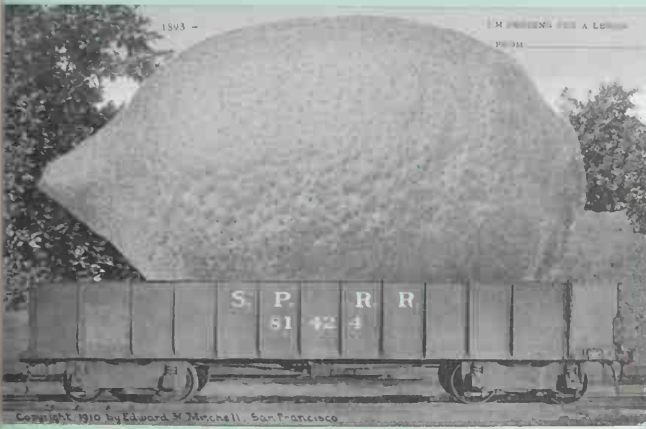
Besides the orchards looming at the campus gate every day, figs dominated my domestic life too. Wooden packing crates of a particular size and design—everyone called them fig boxes—were the bricks-and-boards of assistant professors' bookcases and coffee tables in that pre-Ikea time.

Sometimes after classes and committee meetings, we took afternoon drives in the Sierra foothills, climbing quickly out of the Valley fog into the sunshine, free from responsibility at the booming California State University, Fresno. I was teaching a heavy load with full classes of forty or fifty and never a teaching assistant; advising graduate students, helping establish an early women's studies program; contributing to a Latin American studies program (where my heart lay); and trying to do the scholarly thing by publishing history something-or-other on a regular basis.

No, it was not a bad life, but the fog and the figs made it seem worse than it was. Even so, we had fun in the usual ways: at the movies, hanging out, eating stupendous Sonora style food on the west side. Nevertheless, working hard and doing alright, time seemed to pass so slowly, and it was so heavy, weighted I thought, by months-long sieges of fog much thicker than the proverbial pea soup, and by the imposing shape and volume of the fig trees.

Although my time was not wasted in Fresno, there were plenty of missed opportunities—missed while in dreamland. I wish I had known then what I know now about Arturo Tirado's Teatro Azteca downtown on F Street—and I wish I had attended Mexican films and musical performances there. Snapped out of that Fresno hypnosis years ago now, I'm captivated to learn—and you will be too when you read in these pages—about this extraordinary impresario and philanthropist, and his wildly popular Fresno theater that operated in blazing light and vibrancy, come fog or none.

JANET R. FIREMAN, *Editor*





Founder Frank Oppenheimer in the San Francisco's Exploratorium circa 1968. The Exploratorium opened its doors in 1969 with a handful of exhibits in this cavernous space.

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CHAOS THEORY—

A Drive-By Guide to Bay Area's Science Museums

By Barbara Tannenbaum

The panoramic view from the new tower of the recently reopened de Young Museum in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park is the new "must-see" destination for every Bay Area visitor. My spouse and I were there to celebrate her birthday with her Austin-based sister in tow. Who knew that a nine-story tower rising in the middle of San Francisco's famous

urban park would afford such stupendous views of the Marin Headlands, the downtown skyline, and the future?

Yes, the future. For across the roadway, bulldozers and construction crews are scrapping the landscape clear, readying the site for the emergence in 2008 of the completely reimagined California Academy of

Sciences. Designed by renowned Italian architect Renzo Piano, the new museum features an undulating, living grass rooftop that will appear to float above glass and tree-framed walls. Noteworthy as the western United States' first scientific institution—founded in 1853 by naturalists drawn to California by the Gold Rush—the Academy of Science is now set to reinvent the way museum-goers experience its natural history collections.

I know this because of another glimpse of the future: the kids in my life. Museums may be among the last public institutions that trumpet their appeal to everyone, regardless of background. But the truth is, age matters.

When adults come to town, without fail they seek out the region's art museums. When school lets out, my niece and nephews clamored to do something "real." This meant looking at snakes and penguins, gem stones and star nebulae. Boy or girl, the ability to pull a lever, touch a starfish, manipulate controls, and compare your own size to that of a dinosaur fossil engages both child and chapter one in a satisfyingly visceral way.

From my own stint in elementary school, I remember day-long field trips from West Los Angeles to the Museum of Science and Industry (renamed in 1998 as the California Science Center). One exhibit in particular—a series of eggs showing the process of fertilization and gestation of an embryonic chicken—struck me like the proverbial thunderclap of illumination. It was not just a pretty object (like a statue). Not even an ob-

ject valued for its link to the past (like a suit of armor). This was a process, a chapter in the story of how life is created. Someone had distilled this process into four exhibit cases that I could view with the touch of a button. This memory of connecting the dots, the discovery that learning is fun, shocking, and bracingly clear is a feeling I want my young friends and family members to experience as well. Not to mention that there really is no cheaper way to glimpse the farthest reaches of our galaxy and, give or take some traffic, get home in time for dinner.

In years past, the easy, one-stop destination was Golden Gate Park. But summertime's long sweep across childhood compelled me to research driving directions to the Exploratorium nestled in the city's Palace of Fine Arts, the Lawrence Hall of Science in Berkeley, the Chabot Space and Science Center in Oakland, the NASA Ames Space Exhibit in Moffett Field near Mountain View, and the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose. These science centers go much further than the world of dioramas, bones, and stuffed mammals. Each has their own specialty, taking you deep into the realm of natural phenomenon, outer space, modern technology, and the underlying principles of physics, biology, and earth science.

"You could say the large number of science centers in Bay Area is the legacy of the many talented individuals who arrived at UC Berkeley during World War II to work on the Manhattan Project," says Jeffrey Rudolph, president and CEO of the Los Ange-

les-based California Science Center. Among those he cites are physicist Edmund Orlando Lawrence, the University's first nobel laureate, for whom the institution named the Lawrence Hall of Science when it opened in 1968. "Or," Rudolph continues, "it could be that Silicon Valley, the East Bay, and San Francisco have such distinctive regional identities, that each had a specific vision, mission, and constituency they wanted to address."

According to Rudolph, the current generation of science centers in the U.S. follows a template pioneered by physicist and educator Dr. Frank Oppenheimer, the brother of atomic scientist J. Robert Oppenheimer. Located inside the cavernous Palace of Fine Arts, the Exploratorium opened to the public in 1969 with a "library of experiments" that Oppenheimer built so his students could learn at their own pace and according to their own inclinations. From this came the modern science center focused on "hands-on" exhibits.

"Before the Exploratorium, natural history museums were characterized by their enormous collections displayed in a static fashion," says Rudolph, who is also the immediate past president of the Association of Science-Technology Centers. Of the California Science Center (chartered by California governor Goodwin Knight in 1951 after an inspiration visit to Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History), Rudolph says it is something of a hybrid.

"We had push-button displays. You could turn on a light or make some-

thing move," he says. "But it wasn't the open-ended experience pioneered by the Exploratorium. Their exhibits ask you to consider a scientific principle then allow you to experiment with a variety of outcomes."

Indeed, the Exploratorium was popular with my nephews from the age of five for this precise reason. While the complexities of DNA or visual perception were beyond their immediate grasp, they loved trying to throw a basketball into a hoop while wearing distorting eye glasses, fitting building blocks into an archway, and dancing to colored laser lights.

Likewise, the interactive displays at the Chabot Space and Science Center (opened in 1998 and incorporating the original 1883 Oakland Observatory) easily instructed my young companions in the names and relative sizes of the planets in our solar system, the widespread uses of solar power in space exploration, and exactly how cramped it was to live inside an Apollo space capsule. But it was also the scale that measured their weight on Mercury versus Jupiter and the immersive experience of the IMAX Theater that made each visit full of laughter and energetic sprints up the stairs to the next exhibit.

Of course it is still immensely rewarding to visit the temporary shelter of the Academy of Sciences on Howard Street in San Francisco's South of Market district. The dinosaur bones may be in storage for a while longer. But the beloved penguins are there, as are two stories of rotating exhibits. Plus, it is only two or so blocks away from San Francisco's Yerba

CALIFORNIA JOURNEYS

Buena Gardens with its own merry-go-round, rooftop playground, and tubular chrome slides.

When I polled my niece and twin nephews (now 13 and 9 respectively), my extremely small focus group voiced their loudest cheers for the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose. Built in 1990, it is ostensibly geared to imparting the history of Silicon Valley. But the exhibits reveal how deeply Silicon Valley's creations have entered our lives. This was the museum that best explained the mysteries of their daily world. A display of a citywide map revealed the hidden infrastructure of the Internet and wireless communication. Clips of satellite images were stitched into a fly-over movie revealing the topography of each moon and planet in our solar system—way more interesting than a flat, static image of the rings of Saturn. Kids used a simplified version of CAD/CAM to design a roller coaster ride, applying principles of centripetal force, momentum, and inertia, and then upload their plans to a motion simulator machine. Or take the Jet Pack Simulator—a large, NASA-designed chair that floats on air allows kids to use hand controls to maneuver without gravity, trying to hit a mark on the ceiling with a pole extending upwards from their chair. A long line of boys waited impatiently for their turn.

There was even a “clean room display,” revealing the development and significance of the semiconductor. What impressed me was the little booth you could step into that measured the particles of dirt that cling to all of us.

And the amount of static electricity contained in my hand.

These carefully designed sets and backdrops, peppered with scientific information reminded me of a much-improved version of Walt Disney's Epcot Center in Florida. But amusement parks focus on visual spectacle and physical thrills. Nothing is revealed in an experience geared to the solar plexus rather than the brain.

On the long drive home from last summer's visit to the Tech Museum in San Jose, I listened as the kids expressed a sense of personal satisfaction. They compared schematics for their roller coaster. They debated their favorite moon—Jupiter's Io, Europa, and Ganymede versus Saturn's Titan. Their mood was markedly different from the exhaustion that always follows an outing to an amusement park.

Rudolph told me that we are on the cusp of a new generation of science centers. The line between experiential centers and the traditional zoo, aquarium, and artifact-based institution are beginning to blur. “Science is as much about process as it is about a body of facts,” he says. “You come into these centers to explore and we know there is the potential to instill a life-long memory.”

RESOURCE GUIDE

California Academy of Sciences
875 Howard St. San Francisco, CA
94103-3009. (415) 321-8000
<http://www.calacademy.org>.
Open daily 10 am to 5 pm. See website for information on programs and ticket prices.

Chabot Space and Science Center
10000 Skyline Blvd. Oakland, CA
94619. (510) 336-7491
<http://www.chabotspace.org/>.
Open Wednesday through Sunday
see website for information on
hours, programs, and ticket price

Exploratorium
3601 Lyon Street San Francisco, CA
94123. (415) 561-0399
<http://www.exploratorium.edu>.
Open Tuesdays through Sundays,
10 am to 5 pm. See website for
information on programs and ticket
prices.

Lawrence Hall of Science
Located on Centennial Drive in the
Berkeley hills east of the main UC
Berkeley campus. University of
California, Berkeley Lawrence Hall
of Science #5200, Berkeley, CA
94720-5200. (510) 642-5132
<http://www.lawrencehallofscience.org>.
Open daily from 10 am to 5 pm.
See website for information on pro-
grams and ticket prices.

NASA Ames Exploration Center
Moffett Field, CA 94035.
(650) 604-6274
<http://www.nasa.gov/centers/ames/home/index.html>. Open free of
charge, Tuesdays through Friday
10 am to 4 pm; Weekends noon
to 4 pm.

Tech Museum of Innovation
201 South Market St., San Jose,
CA 95113. (408) 294-8324
<http://www.thetech.org>. Open Tue-
days through Sundays from 10 am
to 5 pm. See website for informa-
tion on program and ticket prices.

Percy H. Steele, Jr., and the Urban League:

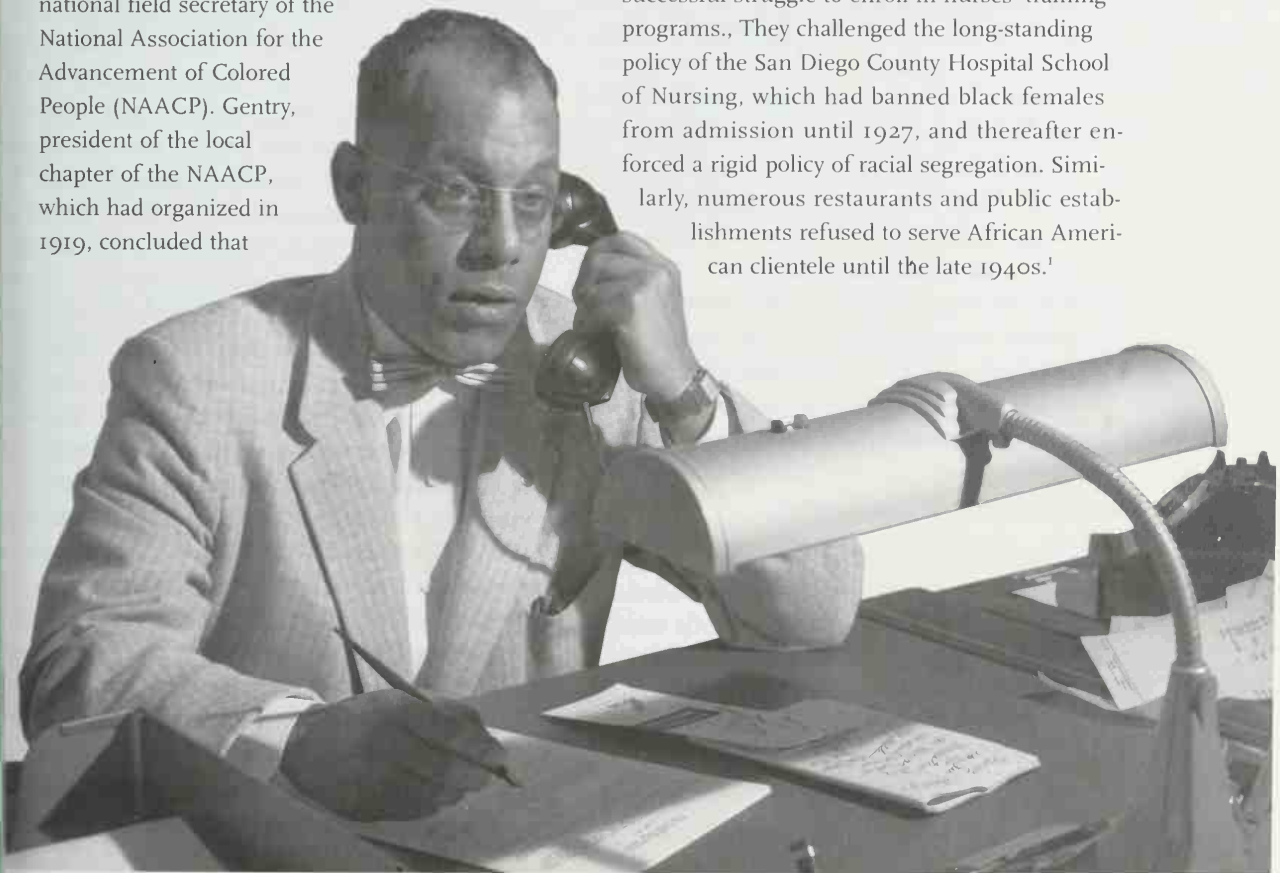
Race Relations and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Post-World War II San Diego

BY ALBERT S. BROUSSARD

"Colored people [in San Diego] are not allowed in restaurants, hotels, nor to drink soda water in drugstores, nor can they rent bathing suits at any bathing house or beach in this city,"

confided E. J. Gentry to James Weldon Johnson, national field secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Gentry, president of the local chapter of the NAACP, which had organized in 1919, concluded that

San Diego, despite its minute black population and reputation for racial tolerance, "is a very prejudice[d] city," an opinion shared by many black San Diegans. Nor were the racial restrictions that Gentry described isolated incidents, for African Americans also faced overt discrimination in their quest to secure housing, employment, and professional training. African American women, for example, waged a protracted, and ultimately successful struggle to enroll in nurses' training programs. They challenged the long-standing policy of the San Diego County Hospital School of Nursing, which had banned black females from admission until 1927, and thereafter enforced a rigid policy of racial segregation. Similarly, numerous restaurants and public establishments refused to serve African American clientele until the late 1940s.¹



Like their counterparts in numerous American cities, black San Diegans were angered by the professed racial egalitarianism of their city and the grim and ugly reality of second-class citizenship. Black San Diegans demanded full-fledged citizenship. They were emboldened by the cries of black leaders such as A. Philip Randolph, who instructed African Americans nationally to demand full equality, and Robert Vann, editor of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, an African American newspaper, who implored blacks to fight racism at home as well as fascism abroad. They were also inspired by the pledge of president Franklin D. Roosevelt to halt most forms of discrimination in the nation's defense industries. World War II thus represented a watershed in black San Diego in several important respects. The war not only increased the size of San Diego's black community dramatically, as southern black migrants came to work in the wartime defense industries, but the global conflict also raised the aspirations of African Americans and triggered a new racial militancy in San Diego's African American community. In many cities the local NAACP branch fought for civil rights, but in San Diego it was the Urban League that played the pivotal role after World War II in pushing for civil rights and full inclusion into the city's burgeoning economy. And unlike Urban League affiliates in other western cities, the San Diego Urban League offered services not only to African Americans, but also to Latinos, and they consciously attempted to improve the status of these workers in several of their employment programs.²

PRECEEDING PAGE: Percy H. Steele, Jr., who served as the San Diego Urban League's executive director from its founding in 1953 to 1963, emerged as a pivotal figure in San Diego's African American community. He personified black leadership in the west by building coalitions between interracial organizations and creating opportunities for African Americans and Mexican Americans in employment, housing, and education.

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During the Second World War, writes Gerald Nash, San Diego "was transformed from a sleepy Navy town into a major metropolitan region." Exclusive of military personnel, San Diego's population had grown by 190,000 between 1941 and 1945, a staggering 147 percent increase. An additional 130,000 servicemen and women also moved to San Diego during the war, swelling the population even further. This population boom, which other West Coast cities also experienced, placed enormous strains on San Diego's resources and infrastructure. Housing, schools, public transportation, recreation facilities, and social services were pressed to accommodate a considerably larger clientele than they had been designed to serve. Yet San Diego, concludes Nash, coped with the wartime crisis remarkably well, in part because the city had been accustomed to dealing with a large transient population of military personnel and because the U.S. Navy played a large role in municipal affairs.³

As was the case in other major West Coast cities and also in the territory of Hawaii, World War I altered both San Diego's economy and its race relations. "The war has revolutionized the economy of San Diego," stated city manager Walter W. Cooper, and African Americans, like migrants of all races and nationalities, came to San Diego principally for jobs. San Diego's small pre-World War II black community, which numbered 4,141 residents or 2 percent of the city's total population in 1940, had been confined, with few exceptions, to service jobs and unskilled menial labor. Even the shortage of workers at the start of World War II did not convince some companies that hiring African Americans was in their best interest. Consolidated-Vultee Aircraft, for example, which was engaged in defense industry production, informed one civil rights organization that they employed only white workers.⁴ Yet the urgent need for manpower, irrespective of race, and the presidential Executive Order of 1941 that prohibited most forms of discrimination in defense industries, slowly opened up a wider range of jobs in San Diego and along the entire West



World War II changed San Diego from a sleepy Navy town to a bustling city, forever changing its economy and its demographic makeup. The U.S. Navy brought in 130,000 servicemen and women, who sought housing, schools—and recreation. Here African American servicemen and their friends dance at the Naval Athletic Field's big ballroom in June 1945.

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Coast to African American workers between 1942 and 1945.⁵

The large wartime migration of blacks, whites, and Mexicans changed San Diego in ways that many local leaders would have never imagined. Like San Francisco, where a branch of the Urban League formed in 1946 around strong community leadership and with the support of local business, community leaders of all races in San Diego also recognized the need for an Urban League branch in their city at the end of World War II. Unlike San Francisco, the National Urban League denied the initial request of San Diegans to establish an Urban League affiliate in their city, largely on the grounds that the city's black community was too small, and their problems in 1945 not dire enough to require an affiliate.⁶

Undeterred, black and white community activists persisted. Eight years would pass before the National Urban League reconsidered its decision, a strong testament to the perseverance of these multiracial activists and particularly Dr. J. J. Kimbrough, a local black dentist, who had been the driving force in San Diego to establish a local Urban League branch.

Jack Johnson Kimbrough, whose family named him after the great and controversial boxer, Jack Johnson, migrated from Mississippi to California in 1915. Although he was only seven years of age when he left Lexington, Mississippi, with his family during the first "Great Migration," Kimbrough's parents, unlike the majority of southern rural migrants, headed west instead of settling into one of the large industrial urban centers in



Dr. Jack J. Kimbrough, a San Diego dentist, was the driving force behind establishing a San Diego branch of the Urban League. Part of San Diego's small black professional class, Kimbrough sought to end employment discrimination and restrictive housing covenants. Kimbrough used his connections to the black and white communities to forge effective coalitions between local business leaders and politicians.

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the North. Indeed, Alameda, California, where the Kimbroughs decided to plant roots, represented a stark contrast to the rigidly segregated and racially oppressive community that they had left behind. Like the majority of black migrants who fled Dixie during the Jim Crow era, Dr. Kimbrough's parents came to California in search of greater job opportunities.⁷ They were not disappointed.

"WE LIVED LIKE HUMAN BEINGS FOR A CHANGE"

A skilled artisan in his native Mississippi, the senior Kimbrough found employment as a blacksmith at the San Francisco Bridge Company, while young Jack, or J. J., as he was known, graduated from Alameda High School, attended Sacramento Community College, and later completed his dental training at the University of California dental school in San Francisco. When he was asked in 1990 if he was better off in Alameda than in Mississippi, Kimbrough was emphatic. "Oh Lord, yes," he replied. "We lived like human beings for a change."⁸ Kimbrough's comment should be tempered by the fact that he was merely a child when he left Mississippi in

1915. Additionally, the passage of seven and a half decades may well have colored Kimbrough's opinion of his native state. Mississippi, nonetheless, had perhaps the most brutal and oppressive system of race relations in the nation, as more than five hundred African Americans were lynched and thousands more endured a pernicious system of racial terror.⁹

Kimbrough began his dental practice in 1935, one of just a handful of black medical professionals in the state of California prior to World War II. But instead of remaining in San Francisco he chose to relocate to San Diego. Although Kimbrough and his wife joined San Diego's small black professional class, the couple discovered that whites discriminated against African Americans in many areas. Black San Diegans, for example, faced intermittent segregation in housing and public accommodations, and were denied access to many jobs in the local economy. Black teachers were not permitted to sign contracts to teach in the San Diego city schools until 1942, two years before black teachers in San Francisco were allowed to teach in that city's public schools. Residential segregation was especially restrictive

in the La Jolla and Garden Hills areas, and blacks were also prohibited as patrons at some fashionable hotels. The Grand Hotel, considered one of the most elegant in San Diego, discouraged black patronage, and Kimbrough, while serving as president of the San Diego chapter of the NAACP, organized a sit-in at the establishment in 1948 to protest this policy.¹¹ By 1945, Kimbrough, along with other civic and business leaders in San Diego, believed that San Diego required an Urban League affiliate, for local social service agencies could no longer meet the demands of an expanding black population. The activist black dentist used his strong connections in both the black and white communities to forge an effective coalition, and his determination and persistence paid off. In 1953 Kimbrough informed San Diego Mayor John Butler that "the San Diego Urban League has been duly incorporated in the State of California as a non-profit social and educational agency."¹²

After waiting for eight years, Kimbrough and his organizing committee had no intention of letting this opportunity slip through their fingers. Within a year, the San Diego Urban League made significant progress, hiring an executive director, selecting a board of directors, and establishing a broad spectrum of contacts with San Diego's business and civic community. In addition, the Urban League's national office had created a western field office in 1952, based in Los Angeles, where W. Miller Barbour was its director.¹³

A LEADER EMERGES

However, Percy H. Steele, Jr., who served as the San Diego Urban League's executive director from its founding in 1953 to 1963, emerged as the pivotal figure in the formative years of the affiliate as well as one of the most significant leaders in San Diego's African American community in the post-World War II era. Steele's activism, style of leadership, and vision of an interracial democracy represented a departure in San Diego, and his civil rights career also personified the emergence of a new type of black professional leader in the far western states between 1945 and 1960.

These individuals, both male and female, generally worked within interracial organizations such as the National Urban League, the NAACP, the National Council of Negro Women, and numerous civic unity councils that were established to fight racial discrimination on the West Coast. Collectively, these new professional leaders attempted to create opportunities for African Americans and Mexican Americans in employment, housing, education, and public accommodations.

Percy H. Steele, Jr., was a remarkable man. Born in 1920 in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, the site where the famous Boston Marathon begins its arduous 26.2 mile trek, Steele's family moved to the nearby community of Cochituate when he was two years of age. One of eight children, young Percy attended elementary school in Cochituate, and later the Downing Town Industrial School in Downingtown. Like a half-million black southern migrants, the elder Steele headed North in search of a better life. And like Dr. J. J. Kimbrough's family, the elder Steele left Lexington, Mississippi, to obtain a better job for himself and a richer life for his family. To a remarkable extent, he succeeded even beyond his own expectations. A strong believer in education as a means of upward mobility, Percy Steele, Sr., graduated from the Massachusetts State College at Amherst and secured employment at an automobile factory, both important measures of success for African American southern migrants. Shortly thereafter, he went to work at the U.S. Post Office, a badge of respectable middle-class achievement for African Americans until the present day and a job that he held until his retirement.¹⁴

A CALLING TO SOCIAL WORK

The Steeles were a strongly religious family, and Percy, Jr., credited his early spiritual training, which he described as "rigidly religious," with shaping his life and influencing his chosen profession. Social work had not been Steele's original career track, but, like many future African American leaders, he came under Howard Thurman's spell. Thurman, who served as Dean of the Chapel at Howard University, was probably

the most eminent black theologian in the nation in the early 1940s. Presenting the commencement address at Steele's high school graduation ceremony, Thurman's message was thoughtful, reflective, and penetrating. He stressed the urgent need for African Americans and other racial minorities to pursue social work, for he believed that in addition to serving the poor and destitute, social work could also benefit race relations by creating interracial fellowship. Thurman's message served as an epiphany for Steele. Steele was ill-prepared to attend college initially, not due to poor grades, but because he had studied carpentry in high school and had intended, probably with the urging of his father, to become a carpenter. Yet Steele did not allow his lack of academic preparation to dissuade him. He took an additional year of high school course work before Durham, North Carolina.¹⁵

Living in the South for the first time did not apparently present any serious problems for Steele, and Durham, the home of Duke University, was a relatively liberal southern city where both black education and black businesses thrived. The renowned sociologist E. Franklin Frazier had once referred to Durham as the black business capital of the United States, and North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance, the largest black insurance company in the nation, had its headquarters there, as did a number of African American banks. Steele received his B.A. degree in sociology from North Carolina Central College in 1944, after which he attended Atlanta University, where he completed a Master's degree.¹⁶

Following his new calling, Steele, like James Farmer, Martin Luther King, Jr., and a host of activists whose lives were shaped by both religion and social justice, also saw religion as the vehicle through which African Americans would advance as a race and simultaneously tear down generations of inequality. "There is no question in my mind that the Negro race, which has been so much oppressed in the past," wrote Steele, "is more and more coming to occupy the place in America to which the teachings of Christ and the

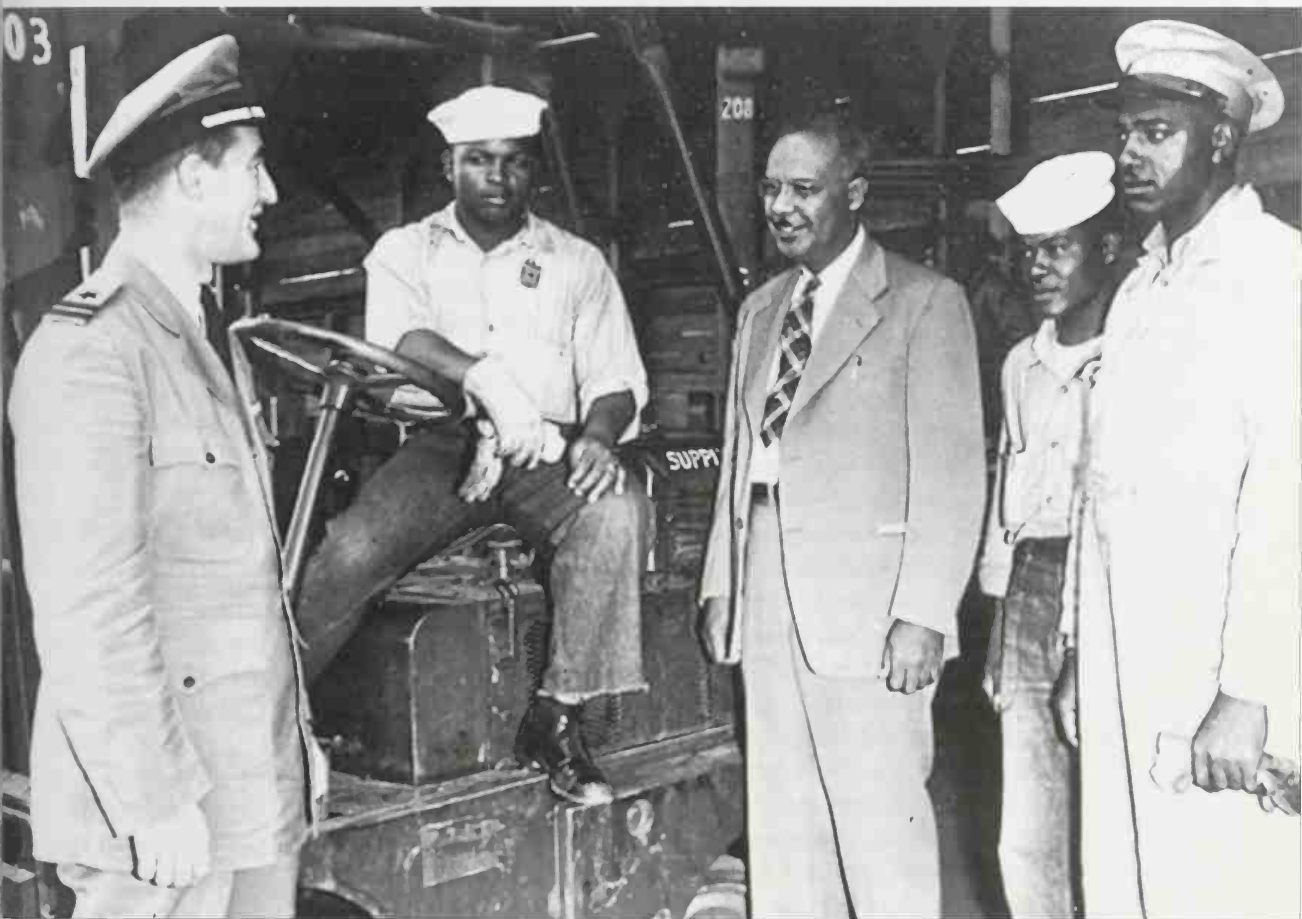
laws of our country entitle it." Steele's comment mirrored the views of Howard Thurman, and predated the most important writings by Martin Luther King, Jr., on this subject by nearly a decade.¹⁷

Ironically, Percy Steele, Jr., was not the San Diego Urban League's first choice to serve as executive director. Charles E. Eason, an African American with significant experience in the field of industrial relations at the Urban League's national office as well as prior experience as an Urban League executive in Little Rock, Arkansas, and Flint, Michigan, declined the position.¹⁸ Eason was straightforward in his reply to Lester Granger, the National Urban League's executive director, explaining why he declined this assignment. "I feel very strongly that if I must gamble with future employment my best advantage is to be in an area close to opportunities which offer the kind of security necessary."¹⁹ Apparently, San Diego must have seemed in 1953 an urban hinterland to Charles Eason, and he was unwilling, as he so indelicately put it, to gamble with his future.

Percy Steele shared none of Eason's reservations for he had served previously as an Urban League official in Washington, D.C., and as executive director of the Morristown, New Jersey, Urban League in the early 1950s. Steele was also the first African American in the nation appointed to the position of executive director of a public housing authority in 1950 at the age of thirty.²⁰ The San Diego Urban League's board of directors approved Steele's appointment without hesitation and the young Urban League executive director made tremendous headway immediately. By the conclusion of his first full year, Steele reported with confidence, "I am of the opinion that the year 1954 was a most eventful and profitable one as our first one and I recommend the extension of our program prospectus for 1955."²¹

THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIGNS ON

Steele's impressive start as executive director was marred, however, by one group that opposed an Urban League affiliate in San Diego. An oppor-



Lester B. Granger (center), executive director of the National Urban League and special assistant to the secretary of the Navy, inspects facilities at the Naval Air Station, San Diego. In this 1945 site visit, Granger speaks with men identified as (left to right) Lieutenant Roper, Seaman First Class Rofes Herring, Seaman Second Class Walter Calvert, and civilian employee Nollie H. Milton.

COURTESY NAVAL HISTORICAL FOUNDATION, NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION PHOTOGRAPH

tunistic organization called the San Diego Race Relations Society, led by Dennis Allen, the organization's president, viewed the establishment of an Urban League as a threat to his prestige and authority.²² Allen, a former president of the San Diego branch of the NAACP, "has managed to place stumbling blocks in every path we take," Steele noted. Yet the San Diego Urban League had the unqualified support of virtually every leader and organization in San Diego's black community, including churches, sororities and fraternities, and social clubs, as well as a broad sector of the white business community. And since the local branch of the NAACP was inactive during these years, the Urban League emerged as the leading civil rights organization in San Diego.²³

The divisiveness of the San Diego branch of the NAACP during the late 1940s and early 1950s rendered it a weak and ineffectual organization, in search of both leadership and meaningful programs. Walter White, the NAACP's executive director, had received an unsubstantiated report as early as 1946 that "a left-wing group has captured control of our San Diego Branch."²⁴ Rather than left-wing activists who attempted to control the branch, however, the San Diego NAACP would succumb to a more virulent foe: sloth. By 1948, the branch's membership had plummeted to 388, attracting both the attention and the ire of NAACP regional secretary Noah Griffin. The San Diego branch had reported 1,803 members the previous year, a decline that the NAACP national office found incomprehensible. The rapid demobilization of African American servicemen at the conclusion of World War II, to be sure, accounted for part of this steep decline in membership. Yet San Diego's NAACP had run an effective program under the leadership of J. J. Kimbrough as branch president, but became apathetic and listless throughout the remainder of the decade. The Reverend John J. Lewis, pastor of the St. Paul Methodist Church, who succeeded Kimbrough as branch president, informed Walter White: "I have been elected President of the San Diego Branch of the NAACP for 1948. Our

Branch here is in a very bad condition, but I shall do all in my power to make it one of the best in the nation."²⁵

Despite Lewis's zeal and good intentions, the San Diego NAACP branch's membership stood at only 240 members in 1951, a far cry from the 1,803 members they had reported in 1946. By the spring 1954, the San Diego NAACP branch was dormant, having been inactive for more than a year. The sad lament of Franklin H. Williams, secretary-counsel of the NAACP's West Coast region, was shared by many in the civil rights community when he wrote, "Unless there no longer exists in San Diego racial discrimination in employment, housing and public places, the absence of an active NAACP chapter is a tragedy shared by all citizens concerned with civil rights."²⁶ The inactivity and subsequent collapse of the local NAACP opened the door for the San Diego Urban League and Percy Steele to play a more decisive role in civil rights in that city.

Nonetheless, the San Diego Urban League would be plagued for the next decade with a lack of funds. During its formative years, the San Diego Urban League failed to receive funding from the local Community Chest, the forerunner of United Way, largely because it had organized too late to meet the organization's funding deadline.²⁷ Thus in its first two years and during perhaps its most vulnerable period, the San Diego Urban League was totally dependent on funds that its board of directors raised locally, limiting to some extent, the scope of its program. In spite of this concern, which was no small matter, Steele informed Lester Granger, that "I am happy to report that your baby League is developing satisfactorily and is gaining widespread community support."²⁸ And as 1955 came to a close, Steele wrote optimistically, "Things are moving along nicely with us in San Diego."²⁹

Indeed, by any standard, the San Diego Urban League had made significant progress during its first two years, despite Steele's recurring health problems.³⁰ The Urban League affiliate hired Louis Ruybalid as its industrial relations secretary, a

move, according to Steele, that "is working out very well. He is very capable and well thought of in all circles."³¹ The San Diego Urban League received an additional boost when Lester Granger agreed to serve as the featured speaker at the organization's first annual dinner, its most important fundraiser. Granger had encouraged Steele, given San Diego's proximity to Hollywood, to pursue the popular African American actress Dorothy Dandridge, who he felt would present an entertaining talk and, Granger was certain, "bring out the men, including me." Yet Dandridge, a striking woman, who was in considerable demand as a speaker in the 1950s and at the height of her cinematic career, declined Steele's invitation. The San Diego Urban League cheerfully settled on Lester Granger, a highly competent speaker in his own right.³²

UNIFYING THE COMMUNITY

One of the Urban League's most important achievements, which often gets overlooked, was its ability to unify competing interests within the black and white communities, as Steele, Louis Ruybalid, and the board of directors sought to broaden the Urban League's reach in San Diego. Some of the San Diego Urban League's early programs were admittedly little more than trial balloons and a means for Steele to cultivate a more diverse group of supporters in San Diego's large multiracial community. A vocational education program that Steele introduced into the San Diego public schools in 1956 is one example. To Steele's surprise, this program, which appealed to students of all races, was so successful that he broadened its scope and introduced it into schools throughout the city.³³

The innovative Adopt-a-Child project spelled the first effort of the Urban League in this important area of social services and charitable work, and represented a collaborative effort with several existing social service agencies. The National Urban League initiated this program in 1955 at its headquarters in New York, and continued to support it until 1961, largely through grants from

the New York Fund for Children and the Field Foundation. Organized by the national office's community services department, Adopt-a-Child's objective was "to arouse public interest" in adopting African American and Puerto Rican babies. Nelson Jackson, the National Urban League's associate director, attempted to clarify the gravity of the situation that these orphaned children faced when he noted that "there were approximately ten homes for every one white child seeking adoption, while the reverse was true insofar as Negro children were concerned."³⁴

The San Diego Urban League's involvement in the adoption project began in 1958, and Steele informed R. Maurice Moss, the associate director of the National Urban League, that "our efforts here in San Diego have proven quite successful and our approach is rather unique." One "unique" aspect of the San Diego's Urban League's program was that it tailored its outreach to the city's large African American and Mexican American communities, rather than Puerto Ricans, who were numerically a tiny percentage of San Diego's population. Regrettably, Steele revealed little in his correspondence about the inner workings of the adoption program itself, but he nonetheless felt strongly that it played an important role in San Diego. "I believe it points out a role of the Urban League that is a little different than any of the others that I have read about coming from other League affiliates," Steele continued.³⁵ The San Diego Urban League worked closely with local family and child welfare agencies and persuaded the Rosenberg Foundation to fund a two-day workshop on minority adoptive homes. And although Steele never revealed the number of African American or Latino children that were placed in permanent homes, he remained proud of the San Diego Urban League's role in this program.³⁶ The success of these programs was one reason Nelson Jackson gave especially high praise to Percy Steele. "It is significant to note that Mr. Steele is well respected, and is given credit for doing a very high caliber job in San Diego," Jackson informed Lester Granger at the national office.³⁷



The Melomen, a Navy-sponsored swing band, are the main attraction at a War Bond drive in San Diego's plaza. After giving their all for the war effort, African Americans were not content with second-class citizenship following the end of the war.

COURTESY NAVAL HISTORICAL FOUNDATION, NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS
ADMINISTRATION PHOTOGRAPH

The success of the vocational education and adoption projects notwithstanding, Percy Steele, Jr., and the San Diego Urban League made their most significant contribution working with business leaders and corporate executives to offer employment opportunities to African American workers, many of whom had recently arrived in California. Here, Steele faced an uphill battle, for San Diego's African American population, which had grown steadily since the early 1940s, had increased to 34,435 by 1960. African Americans now represented 6 percent of San Diego's total population, and the black population had increased eightfold in the space of two decades.³⁸ Yet African American workers, irrespective of their previous experience, skills or education, struggled to advance in many job categories in San Diego and were virtually nonexistent in others. The exclusion of African Americans was especially pronounced in skilled, white collar, and professional jobs, a fact that should have occurred to Steele the moment that he set foot in San Diego. Both Percy Steele and local black leadership developed several strategies to correct this problem, which had been systemic for generations in West Coast cities. They used moral suasion and made personal contacts with business and civic leaders, encouraging them to integrate blacks into their labor force. The San Diego Urban League also hosted workshops, seminars, and conferences in the areas of employment and race relations. Finally the local Urban League held an annual dinner.

The annual dinners, although not unique to San Diego, emerged as an important component of each Urban League affiliate. These affairs served principally as fundraisers, but they also afforded local urban leagues an opportunity to showcase their achievements for the year and to articulate their future goals. In San Diego, the annual Urban League dinner was held at a fashionable location, such as the U.S. Grant Hotel, and an eminent figure served as the keynote speaker. These dinners, which were widely supported by the local community, attracted nearly every impor-

tant dignitary in San Diego. Indeed, in just four short years, the San Diego Urban League annual dinner proved so successful that the local branch proved unable to accommodate the overwhelming demand to attend. "We had the largest audience of any of our previous meetings and in fact, people were turned away because of a lack of space," Steele informed R. Maurice Moss in 1958.³⁹ The success of this important event illustrates Percy Steele's esteem in the larger San Diego community and just how far the San Diego Urban League had come since its founding in 1953.

COALITIONS WITH THE MEXICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Another factor that set the San Diego Urban League apart from other urban leagues on the West Coast was its service in the Mexican American community. No major civil rights organization in the far western states and territories had developed community programs to assist Mexican Americans in tandem with their established programs to serve African Americans. Even in western cities such as Los Angeles or Phoenix, Arizona, where a sizable nucleus of Mexican Americans united with black and white activists on some occasions to press for civil rights, no substantial programs or coalitions developed between these two groups. As Matthew Whitaker has written in his study of the African American civil rights movement in Phoenix, "The failure of Mexican Americans and African Americans to forge substantive coalitions during this decisive era of social and political change profoundly affected the relationship between these two groups throughout the remainder of the twentieth century."⁴⁰

San Diego's black leadership departed from this model in several respects. Steele and his small staff, for example, served Mexican as well as African American students in the San Diego public schools through the Urban League's vocational education program, and in 1956 the San Diego branch provided a scholarship to Alexander Ynigo, a resident of Tijuana, Mexico, to complete

his second year of graduate study in social work at the University of Southern California. Ynigo, a graduate of San Diego State College, had been referred to the San Diego Urban League by the Catholic Casework Bureau, a local charity. Ynigo's previous work history had included field work with the Catholic Youth organization in East Los Angeles and Las Casas de San Gabriel, a community center located in San Gabriel, California. The Urban League's financial assistance permitted Ynigo to ultimately graduate from the University of Southern California, where he received a Master's degree in social work, after which he was appointed a "caseworker-in-training" at the San Diego Traveler's Aid Society.⁴¹

The San Diego Urban League's interest in the welfare and improvement of Mexican Americans was not accidental, but part of a conscious policy developed by Percy Steele and his staff, despite limitations in funding and language training, to serve this important and expanding segment of San Diego's community. One illustration of this new policy was the election of Armando Miguel Rodriguez to the board of directors of the San Diego Urban League in 1958. A graduate of San Diego State College, Rodriguez had served as a member of the Urban League's Industrial Relations and Vocational Guidance Committee for three years. He served as co-chair in 1958. A dedicated educator, Rodriguez had taught for six years at Memorial Junior High School, and in June 1959 he was appointed vice principal of Samuel Gompers Junior High School.

Rodriguez's service on the Urban League board of directors had at least two positive results: it made Percy Steele's entry into the Mexican American community much easier and it revealed to them that the Urban League was not merely an organization created to serve African Americans. This point was brought home emphatically when George Scott, the president of the local Community Chest, inquired about the San Diego Urban League's service to the Mexican community. "We recognize the importance and necessity for programming among the Spanish-speaking population and every effort, as in the past, will be made

to continue in this direction," replied Waldemar Hagan, who served as president of the San Diego Urban League branch.⁴² Scott's question noted the fact that the Mexican American population in San Diego County had experienced a high growth rate between 1950 and 1958, and an estimated 60,000 Mexican families resided in the county. The African American population had grown nearly as rapidly in San Diego in a comparable period, increasing from 17,000 in 1954 to an estimated 32,000 in 1958. "Our social agencies in San Diego County are struggling to keep up," the Urban League admitted in a frank appraisal.⁴³

THE FIRST ANNUAL WORKSHOP ON CULTURAL FACTORS

These concerns, as well as the cultural and language barriers that often separated black and white social workers from Mexican American families, prompted the San Diego Urban League to organize a workshop, the first of its kind in San Diego, to discuss these issues, and to seek solutions. Organized by a coalition of social service and welfare agencies, which included the Catholic Casework Bureau, the Family Service Association, the Bureau of Social Work, and the Community Welfare Council, the First Annual Workshop on Cultural Factors met in October 1959 to discuss how to effectively serve the Mexican American and African American populations in San Diego County. The caseworkers and bureaucrats were interested especially in ascertaining what specific factors impeded the willingness of minority groups to seek social services. They were also interested in learning if the caseworkers themselves harbored prejudices against their clients. One conference leader posed the blunt question "could there be some wholesale acceptance by caseworkers of cultural labels (such as, certain groups are lazy, or warm, or dirty) that make [the] minority distrustful?"⁴⁴

Social workers throughout San Diego County responded enthusiastically to the idea of discussing these sensitive issues. Twenty-seven agencies responded to the call to meet. The conference



African American women also sought opportunities for fair employment, housing, and schools in post-war San Diego. WAVES at the naval base host members of the local community toward the end of the war.

COURTESY NAVAL HISTORICAL FOUNDATION, NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS
ADMINISTRATION PHOTOGRAPH

was designed to serve as a model, if it succeeded, for future programs of this type. From the vantage point of African American leaders such as Percy Steele and the San Diego Urban League, the conference might present, at the very least, more effective solutions for serving the expanding African American and Mexican American populations.⁴⁵

The conference, which consisted of workshops and multiple keynote speakers, proved even more successful than the organizers had anticipated, as more than two hundred caseworkers attended the two-day session. The conference's focus, which appealed to a broad spectrum of social service and welfare agencies, had an especially strong appeal to white social workers who served a large African American and Mexican American clientele. It afforded caseworkers of all races an opportunity to share their experiences working with minority groups, to learn new information in areas of racial and cultural sensitivity, to share academic research in their specific disciplines, and to hear and debate the findings of some of the leading experts in the fields of race relations and social work. These individuals included Dr. Ruth Landis, a University of Southern California professor and a consultant to the Los Angeles health department, Seaton W. Manning, executive director of the San Francisco Urban League, Dr. Martin B. Loeb, a professor at the University of California at Los Angeles, and Dr. Lyle B. Saunders from the University of Colorado.⁴⁶ Although there was general agreement concerning the high quality of each presentation, one paper stood out in particular. "Each of the papers was excellent," Nelson Jackson informed Lester Granger at the national office, "but particularly outstanding was the document developed by Seaton Manning."⁴⁷

Seaton W. Manning, like Percy H. Steele, represented one of the many college-educated and professionally trained African American leaders who migrated to western cities such as San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle, and San Diego during the World War II era. A

native of Kingston, Jamaica, Manning, who earned a Master's degree from Boston University, had served as executive secretary of the Urban League of Greater Boston, and as the industrial relations specialist at the Urban League's New York City headquarters. In 1946, he agreed to serve as executive director of the San Francisco Urban League, a position that he held until 1961.⁴⁸ Manning's argued persuasively in his presentation that social workers in general were poorly trained to work with clients from different cultures or people who possess value systems different from their own. Cultural anthropologists, he argued, and sociologists to a lesser extent, were far better suited than social workers to serve people from disparate backgrounds. Yet Manning directed a far more critical comment at his profession. He charged his social work colleagues with "timidity" in their refusal to link the most salient aspects of the civil rights struggle, such as the day-to-day struggle for better jobs, housing, and education with their work. Manning wrote:

If the social agencies were to desert their posture of benevolent neutrality in the civil rights field and were to take more forceful action on some of the civil rights issues such as housing, employment, education, and further, if this were to become known in the Negro community, the utilization of agency services by this group might tend to increase[,] for the agencies would then be regarded as interested friends and protagonists rather than as ambivalent preservers of the status quo.

He also implored his colleagues to hire more African American professional and clerical workers, and to not assign black social workers only to African American or nonwhite clients. These proposed reforms, Manning believed, were not merely symbolic, for they "would be a declaration by the agency to the community of its belief in the principle of employment on merit and its non-belief in the stereotype of the congenitally lazy, uneducated and uneducable Negro."⁴⁹ These bold comments rattled some social workers and hit a sensitive nerve with others. Yet

Manning's presentation was received favorably. Percy Steele made no attempt to disguise his glee after hearing Manning's candid remarks. "Seaton Manning's paper was, by far, the most valuable material presented, and in easy to understand language," he informed Nelson Jackson.⁵⁰ One of the most revealing comments, however, came from Nelson Jackson, the National Urban League's associate director and a conference consultant. Jackson reported that one participant stated that "Seaton Manning's paper could have been accepted more easily if it had been presented by a Caucasian," rather than an African American. A respected social worker and an experienced Urban League executive, Manning stood little to lose, though much to gain, by stating his opinions frankly, even if it meant offending some of his white professional colleagues. Jackson, nonetheless, viewed the conference as a great success, "and if it can be continued," he wrote, "it can strengthen services to minority groups in this section of California in the future."⁵¹

BROADENING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Unquestionably, the most important service that Percy Steele and Urban League officials provided to African Americans in San Diego and in other West Coast cities was opening doors to a broader range of employment opportunities. Here, the San Diego Urban League, like urban leagues in numerous American cities during the post-World War II era, had mixed results, and progress for African American workers came in slow increments. However, Percy Steele's moral fervor and commitment to a racially just society had a pivotal influence on numerous white leaders in San Diego, such as Lieutenant Commander Dennis Nelson, who participated in an Urban League employment program in 1959. Nelson, who was stationed in San Diego, and had thousands of men under his command, sought to end segregation and racial discrimination. He gave an influential speech promoting racial equality in American society that was played on the Voice of America radio station.⁵² Steele's rapport with the

U.S. military, particularly the local naval base in San Diego, served the African American workforce effectively. Such was the case when an official at the U.S. Naval Repair facility in San Diego asked Steele's assistance in recruiting "qualified engineers" and other skilled workers. These small breakthroughs, although they appear minor on the surface, represented progress for African American workers.⁵³

Commander Nelson's abhorrence of racial discrimination notwithstanding, African American workers remained under-represented in clerical, white collar, skilled, and professional jobs in San Diego, as they did in other western cities. Yet the very presence of an Urban League in San Diego, as it had done in San Francisco and Seattle, prompted some local businesses and firms to hire African Americans for white collar and clerical positions for the first time. Similarly, black and Mexican American teachers continued to be hired in the San Diego public schools, although in modest numbers. These small gains gave Steele every reason to be sanguine. In his estimation, "we saw some significant gains being made," particularly in the aircraft industry. "The aircraft companies were bringing in people by the hundreds for these jobs," Steele noted, "but there was this problem of jobs, upgrading, union membership, and the like."⁵⁴ Discriminatory union policies had proven a deterrent for African American workers in numerous job categories along the entire Pacific Coast for decades, and the absence of a union card continued to keep many African Americans out of these lucrative jobs. Ever so slowly, African American workers were making small inroads into skilled and semiskilled positions, jobs that had largely been closed to them just a decade earlier. It took Mexican Americans considerably longer to break down these same racial barriers in many western states.⁵⁵

"ONE OF MY MOST VALUABLE PROFESSIONALS"

By the spring 1962, Percy Steele, Jr., began to contemplate his future with the National Urban League. When he had been asked by Lester Granger

to become executive director of the San Diego Urban League in 1953, Steele felt that ten years would be the minimum amount of time that he needed to get an effective program in place and achieve some of his objectives, such as breaking down discriminatory barriers in employment. Steele informed Nelson Jackson that he was considering an offer from California's governor, Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, to serve as assistant chief to the State Fair Employment Practices Division, and laid out his reasons candidly. "For some time now I have given considerable thought to my future in terms of security, retirement, and the education of my daughter. In San Diego I am not securing any of the benefits which I should and which are usually offered in social welfare agencies," he informed Jackson, his friend and confidant at the national office.⁵⁶

Apparently, Steele's dissatisfaction was two-fold. He was compensated poorly, in his opinion, as an Urban League executive director, and he lacked both the staff and the budget, he felt, to serve San Diego's community as effectively as he had hoped. Steele wrote Nelson Jackson that the "Urban League could be making a more significant contribution to the community betterment etc., if I had an adequate staff and budget to do the job." Protested that he was no longer content to serve as "a one man operation," Steele asked Jackson if his professional staff could be expanded.⁵⁷

Steele's salary proved to be the most contentious point. In a word, he was poorly paid, a point he attempted to drive home repeatedly to the new National Urban League executive director, Whitney M. Young, Jr., "Considering the responsibilities, the scope and importance of the job, I now feel that \$13,000 is the minimum amount for such a job considering my training and years of experience in the field."⁵⁸ Not surprisingly, Young, who praised Steele's role in the San Diego office, informed the young executive director that his salary request "represents an almost insurmountable one, not from the standpoint of your own worth or the demands of the job, but purely from the standpoint of present national salaries and

our own known resources at this level." Fearing realistically that he might lose Steele to a more lucrative job, Young, a shrewd bureaucrat, although a miser, appealed to Steele's loyalty as an Urban League official as well as his commitment to the civil rights struggle. "I know that under any condition we certainly don't want to lose a person whom I regard as one of my most valuable professionals in the Urban League movement," Young replied.⁵⁹

Whitney Young was merely buying time, as the demand for Percy Steele's talent and expertise had grown considerably since his arrival in San Diego in 1953. Steele, for example, had been elected secretary-treasurer of the executive secretaries council of the National Urban League, illustrating the esteem that he held among his Urban League peers nationally. Similarly, the Catholic Interracial Council of New York acknowledged Steele's national presence in 1959 by awarding him the James J. Hoey Award for interracial justice. Steele, as Whitney Young knew all too well, also commanded great respect in San Diego and throughout the state of California. He served as chairman of the San Diego County Board of Public Welfare, as vice-president of the California Social Workers Organization, and in 1960 Governor Brown appointed Steele to the State Board of Social Welfare, the most prestigious political appointment for a social worker in California. Steele would also chair this prestigious organization. Two years later, Governor Brown offered the capable Steele the position of assistant chief to the State Fair Employment Practices Division.⁶⁰ Although no opportunist, Steele clearly understood that he was in demand and that his star was rising. He understood, too, that such opportunities did not often knock for African American professionals in California.

Percy Steele had his family to consider, for whom he had asked to sacrifice a great deal with his frequent absences and demanding work schedule. Raising a family on the salary of an Urban League executive was difficult in San Diego in the early 1960s, but even more difficult, admittedly, for

the thousands of unskilled African American or Mexican American workers who did not have the benefit of Steele's education, contacts, or professional training. Percy Steele was a realist, but one who did not make this important decision in haste. He continued to ask Whitney Young to increase his salary, but to no avail. In December 1963, Steele decided, after residing in San Diego for a decade, to resign his position. Instead of joining the staff of Governor Brown, Percy Steele remained committed to the mission of the National Urban League and accepted a position as executive director of the Bay Area Urban League in San Francisco.⁶¹ After fighting for racial justice and the integration of African Americans and Mexican-Americans into the economic mainstream of San Diego, Percy Steele sought a new challenge.

NEW CHALLENGES

Percy Steele's relocation to San Francisco in 1964 merely opened a new chapter in his civil rights career. He served as executive director of the Bay Area Urban League from 1964 until his retirement in 1990. In total, Percy Steele spent more than forty years in service to the National Urban League, fighting for racial justice. Yet Steele's ten years as executive director of the San Diego Urban League were critical in the history of the city's African American community, as well as its earliest attempt to construct an effective interracial coalition to fight racial discrimination in the post-World War II era.

A committed consensus builder and leader who sought to bridge the racial divide between African Americans, Mexican Americans, and the more dominant non-Hispanic white community, Steele achieved significant progress in the space of a decade, although he would have been the first to admit that considerable racial discrimination remained entrenched in some areas of employment and in the city's powerful trade unions. Moreover, Steele achieved these gains despite fewer resources and staff at his disposal than his Urban League counterparts in other western cities such as Los Angeles or San Francisco, both of

which were plagued by infighting and weak leadership in the early 1960s. Steele arrived in San Diego at a critical time in its history, as the city had experienced a war-time boom economically and demographically, and was recognized as one of the emerging Sunbelt cities in the southwest. Steele's most enduring contribution was his realization in the early 1950s that San Diego, and every American city, would need to use the talent and labor of each of its citizens, including the large Mexican American population, to advance. Otherwise, America's racial landscape, as the 1965 Watts riot later revealed, would be fraught with tension, chaos, mistrust, and indiscriminate violence. Thus the numerous boards and councils that black community leaders such as J. J. Kimbrough and Percy Steele sat on, as well as the alliances and friendships that they established with white and Mexican American leaders in San Diego, however tenuous, set the stage for a new generation of African American and Latino professional leaders in the closing decades of the twentieth century in San Diego and throughout the far west.⁶²

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Broussard has published five books, *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900–1954*, *African American Odyssey: The Stewarts, 1953–1963*, *American History: The Early Years to 1877*, and *The American Republic Since 1877*, and *The American Vision* (co-authored with James McPherson, Alan Brinkley, Joyce Appleby, and Donald Ritchie). He is past president of the Oral History Association and a former chair of the nominating committee of the Organization of American Historians. Professor Broussard is currently writing a history of African Americans in the Far West from 1945 to the present.

GOVERNOR REAGAN: *A Reappraisal*

BY JACKSON K. PUTNAM

Reagan's diffidence about his gubernatorial years is an open secret rather than a puzzling mystery: the seemingly startling disconnect between ideological principle and gubernatorial practice.

Today's Republicans seem devoted to a political apotheosis of Ronald Reagan. Determined to ensure that the "judgment of history" will rank him among the "greats," they react strongly to anyone challenging the standard assumption that Reagan demonstrated unique political gifts during his first foray into politics as governor of California and further displayed those talents as president of the United States.¹ This essay challenges only the former of these two assertions, which, nevertheless, may strike a raw nerve among the self-appointed curators of Reagan's legacy, even though the popular Great Man himself often seemed uneasy when recalling his days in the governor's chair. In his autobiography, for example, he devoted a mere five percent of its pages to those eight years (1967–1974 inclusive).²

The probable reason for Reagan's diffidence about his gubernatorial years is an open secret rather than a puzzling mystery: the seemingly startling disconnect between ideological principle and gubernatorial practice. Campaigning as a right-wing ideologue in 1966 and a sworn enemy of

big government and high taxes, he repudiated not only Pat Brown and the "spendthrift" Democrats but the entire California political system engendered in the previous half-century. Ironically, that system had been perfected almost entirely by Republicans, especially Hiram Johnson and Earl Warren. While it was complex, often inchoate, and always incrementalist, its notable success was twofold: It was activist in seeking solutions to public problems and it was pragmatic in devising and applying them.³ Reagan, as a right-wing ideologist, was a sworn enemy to both activism and pragmatism. Another open secret is that he made pragmatic compromises between ideology and political reality, but the extent of these compromises and their consequences has been largely unexplored. Furthermore, Reagan almost never acknowledged in public having compromised, and his rhetoric ceaselessly reiterated his devotion to ideological principles that his compromises undermined. Finally, he always won this ideological-pragmatic shell game, and few among his admirers called him to account for his derelictions from ideological purity.

Ronald Reagan's legacy as governor of California (1967–1974) is often overlooked. Although he denied his progressive achievements, Reagan practiced California's characteristic pragmatism as well as moderate activism while in the governor's office. In this photograph Governor Reagan speaks at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, June 1969.

PHOTOGRAPH BY VINCENT MAGGIORA, CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION



Reaganites have another reason to discourage inquiry into his governorship. They already benefit from an existing rationale that minimizes and justifies his wanderings, a rationale that, curiously and gratuitously can be traced to liberal and moderate pundits. The most persistent of these is journalist and author Lou Cannon, who has written five books on Reagan. Cannon posits that Reagan quickly overcame his ideological rigidity and ignorance of the state's political system by employing his prodigious memory, quick-study methods acquired in his acting career, and an extremely sound set of basic political instincts. So equipped, Cannon believes, Reagan turned himself into a gifted political leader early in his governorship. Left-wing journalist Robert Scheer even denies that Reagan was ignorant in the beginning, arguing that he

spent years familiarizing himself with the state government's workings before announcing his 1966 campaign for governor. I interviewed him at the time, and there was no question about his being prepared.⁴

Reagan defenders have disagreed, such as Cannon and Lyn Nofziger:

Reagan knew little about the legislative process when he was elected—"We were not only amateurs, we were novice amateurs," said his communications director, Lyn Nofziger—and he made many mistakes.⁵

Cannon nevertheless insists that Reagan soon overcame his amateurishness and quickly became a forceful and talented political leader, and he is seconded in this view by fellow journalist George Skelton along with historians Matthew Dallek and Kevin Starr.⁶ The latter surprisingly elevates Reagan to rank alongside Hiram Johnson, Earl Warren, and Pat Brown as "four previous—and great governors." Starr ascribes Reagan this high rank because of his sustained "... good humored relations with key Democrats ...," and because, after listening to the latter, he "gave Californians the biggest tax hike in their history—and got away with it."⁷ Aside from the extremely conser-

vative Senator Hugh Burns, one wonders about the identities of those "key Democrats" with whom Reagan was allegedly so compatible. Certainly such words do not apply to the most crucial Democrat, Jesse Unruh, who sometimes cooperated with Reagan for political reasons, although their relationship was far from "good humored." Others agree with Starr, that Reagan's billion-dollar tax increase of 1967 was a gutsy departure from both his 1966 campaign promise and his basic ideology. Skelton, for example, said the increase, "Never hurt him: Saved the state."⁸ Elsewhere Skelton notes that Reagan actually raised taxes twice,⁹ so that his 1967 savior behavior was brief. In reality, Reagan presided over three tax increases.

Reagan's 1967 tax increase was among the first of a long series of significant departures from a right-wing agenda that continued throughout his governorship. Seven weeks earlier, Reagan's first budget had exceeded Pat Brown's last one by nearly one-half billion dollars, instead of staying the course by inaugurating a policy of "squeeze, cut and trim" as promised.¹⁰ If this 9 percent increase was upsetting to conservatives, the billion-dollar tax increase bill must have been an outright shock. Senate Bill 556 raised sales taxes from three to five cents on the dollar; the maximum income tax from seven to ten percent; bank, corporation, and inheritance taxes from 5 percent to six percent; distilled liquor taxes from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per gallon; and cigarette taxes from three cents to ten cents per pack.¹¹ The bill was designed not only to increase revenues and to put the state's finances on an even keel, but also it began a substantial tax shift from an overreliance on the property tax to the more "progressive" income and sales taxes. Since Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh had long been dedicated to exactly this kind of reform, he lent his support to the bill and played a major role in steering it through the legislature.¹² Unruh had long been the *bête noire* of most Republicans and all of the state's ideological conservatives, who must have blanched at the thought of Reagan making a political "alliance" with him.

The governor retained some ideological respectability in connection with this tax bill by prevailing over Unruh's wish to include a provision for income tax with-holding. The governor adamantly repeated the right-wing mantra that "taxes should hurt," and when the speaker eventually capitulated on this issue, Cannon declares this to be a major Reagan victory and insists that "... it was Unruh who gave up the most" in the encounter.¹³ This is dubious since the entire tax bill was the realization of some of Unruh's fondest dreams, and Cannon concedes that the law *in toto* looked as though "... it had been crafted by a New Deal Democrat."¹⁴ Unruh was probably content to grant the governor this limited and ephemeral "victory," and Reagan soon changed his mind on the withholding issue.

Reagan did not limit his 1967 compromises to fiscal affairs alone. During his 1966 campaign, he had demanded the repeal of the Rumford Fair Housing Act. This 1963 milestone in California's civil rights movement had been shelved by Proposition 13, the white backlash initiative, in 1964. This measure in turn was invalidated by the courts in 1966, placing the Rumford Act back in operation, which caused Reagan to pledge himself to secure its repeal as a violation of "sacred" property rights.¹⁵ When the conservative Democrat and president pro tempore of the state senate, Hugh Burns, obliged Reagan by originating a repeal bill and pushing it through his house, Assembly Speaker Unruh led the opposition against it, citing the Rumford Act's "symbolic" significance to the black community and hinting at the fearful specter of a repeat of the 1965 Watts riots. Reagan, similarly uneasy about repeal by this time, let it be known that now he wanted only amendments to the Rumford Act and perhaps preferred that Burns's bill be killed in the assembly. Unruh and liberal Republican assemblyman William Bagley did this and passed a substitute measure so mild that both probably realized that the issue would be stalemated in the Senate, which is exactly what happened. A year later, during his brief bid for the presidential nomination, Reagan flatly opposed another effort to repeal the Rumford

Another open secret is that Reagan made pragmatic compromises between ideology and political reality, but the extent of these compromises and their consequences has been largely unexplored.

Act, specifically repeating Unruh's language of the measure's "symbolism" to the black communities.¹⁶ The governor gave no attribution to Unruh, and neither does Cannon, who concludes his account of the affair with the following homily: "Reagan was a conservative beyond a doubt. He was also a practical and resourceful politician."¹⁷ At the time, in the spring of 1968, however, some conservatives had begun to harbor some doubts on the genuineness of Reagan's conservatism, as will be shown.

In 1967 the abortion issue aroused the governor's enormous discomfort. At the time, his greatest disadvantage was that no right-wing, left-wing positions had emerged to guide him. Surprising to recall, most non-Catholic conservative Republicans were in favor of abortion liberalization, as were many liberals in the California legislature. The Therapeutic Abortion Act of 1967, for example, authored by liberal Democrat Anthony Beilenson, passed with five republican votes out of seven in the crucial Senate Judiciary Committee.¹⁸ Reagan signaled that he would accept his party leaders' desires on the subject if the bill passed the legislature, but when it did so he went through agonies of indecision before finally signing it into law. Within a few years, especially after the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision of 1973 strongly supporting California's act, the right-wing nationwide had swung overwhelmingly into the anti-abortion camp. Reagan, of course, did too, and he became effusive ever after in his *mea culpas* for having signed the legislation.



During Reagan's tenure as governor, campus unrest grew throughout the state. Although he frequently criticized "riotous" students and "rebellious" professors, he played a game of talking rather than acting. Democratic legislators encouraged administrators to restore order without state interference, which they did despite misconceptions about continuing campus anarchy. Here, marchers carry a Free Speech sign to a November 1964 UC Regent's meeting at the University of California, Berkeley.

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In the same year Governor Reagan began another long process that would result as his most significant departure from his commitment to conservatism: his environmentalist stance.¹⁹ Misled by his offhand comment during the 1966 campaign that "A tree is a tree — how many more do you need to look at?" environmentalists feared, and developers hoped, that conservation efforts would get short shrift from the Reagan administration. In 1967, however, when he signed a legislative resolution blocking the construction of a dam on the middle fork of the Feather River and a bill creating the California Air Resources Board he inaugurated a series of actions marking him as a consistent, if moderate, environmentalist. In addition to his support for the Save San Francisco Bay Commission, Reagan successfully backed the creation of the Redwood National Park as well as the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, and threw his support to the successful Coastal Initiative of 1972.²⁰ He also signed bills creating the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, adding thousands of acres to the state park system including two Pacific Ocean underwater preserves, and the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 which, by instituting the environmental impact report system, became the bedrock law of environmental protection in the state.²¹

As important as projects created were others evaded, as Reagan had shown in his opposition to the Feather River dam. In 1968 he successfully opposed the controversial Dos Rios dam on the Eel River, and in 1972 he took the lead in killing a proposed trans-Sierra highway which would have breached the solitude of two federal wilderness areas. In all of these admirable endeavors Reagan enhanced his image as a conservationist but undermined his commitment to pro-business, pro-growth conservatism.

Early in 1967 Reagan also entered into an unlikely and little-known agreement with his arch rival Jess Unruh on the volatile issue of campus unrest. Ever since the 1964 Free Speech Movement outbreaks on the University of California, Berkeley, campus, Unruh had struggled to con-

tain the issue politically and particularly to deter the legislature from holding sensational hearings and demanding repressive legislation suggestive of McCarthyism and the notorious efforts of California's Senator Jack Tenney in 1940s and early 1950s.²² Until Reagan took over, Unruh had succeeded, but in May 1965 he appeared to succumb to right-wing pressure and agreed to chair a select committee to study problems at the University of California.²³ He was fiercely criticized for this by Governor Pat Brown and many other liberals, who failed to note that Unruh's actions constituted a politics of procrastination and evasion rather than repression and activism. Although he frequently criticized "riotous" students and "rebellious" professors, as did many legislators of all stripes, he played a game of talking rather than acting. Unruh's committee did nothing throughout 1965, and in May 1966 he was still dithering about reconstituting it and about methods of conducting his inquiry. In the meantime, Unruh encouraged college administrators to take charge of their campuses, discipline students, and restore order without legislative interference, which they did despite common misconceptions about continuing campus "anarchy."²⁴

In 1967, with Reagan in the governor's chair, Unruh was probably pleasantly surprised when the new governor announced that he wished to postpone addressing his campaign promise to "clean up the mess" at Berkeley. He had promised to appoint Watts Riot investigator John McCone to investigate the institution. Now he declared that other problems such as tuition and hiring a new president at Berkeley were of greater urgency. Unruh enthusiastically seized upon this invitation to prolong procrastination and he pushed through a resolution converting his committee into a leisurely body studying such problems as admissions policy, finance, and the like.²⁵ In so doing he ensured the state higher education system that it would be largely free of interference from predatory legislators. Aside from some stigma for cooperating with Unruh, Reagan lost nothing by this maneuver. He was now free to

Reagan's 1967 tax increase was among the first of a long series of significant departures from a right-wing agenda that continued throughout his governorship.

profit politically by professing continual outrage at campus upheavals without developing any policy to deal with them. He scored other short-term political victories by scapegoating the university and other college administrations, cutting their budgets, firing University of California President Clark Kerr, and imposing tuition throughout the university and state college system, all over the determined opposition of the Democrats generally and Speaker Unruh in particular.²⁶ Unruh was the big gainer in forestalling an investigation of the university by the legislature, however, even though most people never realized that Reagan had acquiesced in the bargain.

Beginning with his tax bill of 1967, Reagan initiated yet another political process that also constituted a major violation of his ideological principles. Reagan relied on his Department of Finance, part of the dreaded and allegedly overblown state "bureaucracy," to draft the tax bill. Because he succeeded in this endeavor—albeit more because Unruh and the majority Democrats supported the tax bill than because of its bureaucratic origins—Reagan increasingly relied on state departments. These were staffed by experts and directed by his successive chiefs of staff William C. Clark and Edwin Meese, both of whom were philosophical devotees of a highly structured administrative system.²⁷ What none of these worthies seemed to realize or ever acknowledge was their actions strengthened California's liberal tradition, rather than a conservative program.

Beginning as early as the 1920s, California progressives had advocated efficiency in government by adopting new management and accounting

methods along modern business models.²⁸ This system had grown apace into the 1960s, according to the two ablest students of the subject, and when he confronted it, "Reagan opted for a statesmanlike position and careful management practice, rather than a strong ideological position."²⁹ The same scholars come to the following conclusion about the governor and the bureaucrats:

A final ironic consequence of the structured Reagan administration was that it worked well to systematize government. Many of the management reforms and experienced executives that the Reagan administration brought to Sacramento in fact made government run better and deliver services more effectively. While the budget more than doubled from \$4.6 billion to \$10.2 billion, in large part due to inflation, the number of state workers did not grow appreciably. But neither did California government shrink and allow private citizens to handle their own affairs. Instead government entrenched itself in many ways as a strong effective force in California society.³⁰

The governor doubtless realized that his 1967 legislative policies strengthened liberalism, not conservatism, but he blundered badly when he changed course and began to devise conservative policies. Although the idea of Reagan as a political bungler is alien to his popular and official image, his foray into the field of mental health that year certainly qualifies for that description. The Short-Doyle Act of 1957 and its subsequent amendments had put California in the forefront of mental health care. The State Department of Mental Hygiene, using new psychiatric techniques and new psychotropic drugs, was able to transfer many of its less impaired patients from hospitals to new community health centers enabling them to live more-or-less normal lives in their home communities. The consequent reduced case loads in the hospitals allowed staff to focus efforts on patients requiring more intensive care.

Still a work in progress, the promising system needed additional legislative support, but Reagan put an abrupt halt to such progress. He and his advisers saw the reduced patient load as an opportunity to save money under his celebrated policy of "squeeze, cut, and trim," and in his 1967 budget he proposed to reduce hospital staffing by a whopping 3,724 positions. The Democrats in the legislature, though generally opposed, lacked unity on the issue and although they were able to reduce the number of layoffs by some two thousand staff and provide funds for their retention, the governor blue penciled this item from the budget and the 3,700 odd staff members indeed lost their jobs.³¹ Cannon errs seriously when he says that Reagan, hearing of the legislature's lay-off reductions, "accepted the change without comment."³² In fact Reagan publicly "... said he cut the 'unnneeded' funds the legislature added to the mental health budget," and "Gordon P. Smith, state director of finance said this means a reduction of 3,700 positions."³³

Although Cannon faults Reagan for his 1967 actions on mental health, he constructs a fanciful little fairy tale to the effect that beginning in 1968, Reagan, seeing the error of his ways, signed progressive mental health legislation and restored funding so that he could claim accurately in 1969 that California was "the number one state in the treatment of the mentally ill."³⁴ Cannon seems to refer to the California Mental Health Act of 1967, otherwise known as the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act, which he describes most inaccurately.³⁵ In reality, although Reagan signed this bill, he supported a policy of reduced funding for mental health, which was made worse by his successors in the governor's chair. One of the bill's authors declares that:

... although Reagan signed the bill, much to his credit, he really emasculated it. He cut something like twenty or thirty million dollars out of it in the first year. He put that back in the General Fund. That took the guts right out of this state money for local treatment. It emptied out the hospi-

tals, but there was no follow up treatment. That's what contributed to the current homeless problem . . . And even the amount we had allocated wasn't enough. It was a start.³⁶

Small wonder that, as Cannon says, "Reagan . . . was never completely comfortable" with his role in this affair and that "[h]e avoided mentioning the mental hospitals in speeches touting his economies . . ."³⁷

Reagan could take some solace from the fact that his mental health cuts were a legislative "victory," since Republican solidarity in both houses prevented his item vetoes from being overridden. On the other hand, his assaults on the Medi-Cal program ended in total defeat. Because Medi-Cal, California's version of the federal Medicaid program, was partly state-funded and presumably an exercise in "socialized medicine," Reagan wished to curtail or even eliminate it. His major antagonists in this effort were Speaker Unruh and moderate Republican assemblyman John Veneman, who teamed up in April and May 1967 to defeat Reagan's proposal to reduce state funding for the program.³⁸ Reagan responded by rashly attempting to implement Medi-Cal cuts by executive order, which he sought to justify by alleging, via radio and television, that the state lacked funds to pay for all that was mandated by law. He reacted with fury when a Sacramento Superior Court judge denied his imaginative view of the governor's constitutional powers, and blocked implementation of his Medi-Cal cuts.³⁹

When the state Supreme Court upheld the lower court's ruling, Reagan ineptly demanded that the legislature amend the law in special session to legitimize his curtailments. Further, he told the court to "Get Out of Our Store" because it had "substituted its policy views for those of our own medical experts."⁴⁰ If the befuddled chief executive really entertained a notion that the Democrat-dominated legislature would take the side of a conservative executive department against a famously liberal Supreme Court on a patently liberal issue such as this, Speaker Unruh quickly

disabused him of his belief. In a series of legislative maneuvers of the sort for which he was famous, Unruh turned the tables on the governor, pushing several measures to remedy Medi-Cal's alleged fund shortage.⁴¹

The governor beheld these legislative high-jinks with dismay, resentment, and not a little comical ignorance of the legislative process.⁴² But he was not relieved when most of these measures were shelved. The reason for this was Unruh's dawning awareness that further appropriations were unnecessary because Medi-Cal was not running out of money as the administration asserted. In late November the speaker noted that it had serially reduced its estimates of Medi-Cal's shortages from \$210 million to \$184 million to \$71 million and finally to \$51 million, and he backed a resolution to put a moratorium on Medi-Cal legislation and administrative action until a legislative committee had audited the program and determined the state of its finances.⁴³ Reagan counterattacked via television with a one-and-one-half-minute barrage attacking Medi-Cal as an enormously costly program, telling taxpayers that it amounted to "medical carte blanche," which provided "better medical care for these cardholders than you can afford for yourself or your family."⁴⁴

In a dazzling display of bad timing, his administration simultaneously announced that the state treasury harbored a \$30 million surplus due to its celebrated policy of "squeeze, cut, and trim." Unruh seized the occasion to renew his demand for a moratorium on Medi-Cal cuts, and pushed through a bill creating a legislative committee to investigate Medi-Cal financing. By this time Reagan had capitulated and accepted the moratorium, with Unruh gloating: "I would not say this was the governor's finest hour." This defeat turned into a rout when a news leak revealed that Reagan had sacked his highly respected public health director, Dr. Lester Breslow, for not supporting him on his Medi-Cal cuts, and a few days later, the governor's director of finance Gordon Paul Smith made a famous slip of the tongue. Admitting that there was now no shortage of Medi-Cal funds, he

was asked if this didn't mean that Unruh and the Democrats had been right all along on this issue. "Yes — precisely, precisely," he replied. The honest but naive finance director lost his job a few weeks later probably for that impolitic remark.⁴⁵

In 1967 Reagan won another Pyrrhic victory when he needlessly antagonized many elderly folk, who were becoming a formidable political force in the state. He did so by vetoing a bill to provide a Social Security "pass-on" to the state's old-age pensioners.⁴⁶ Many of the latter received Social Security funds as well as small pensions from the state under California's Old-Age Security Act of 1929. After 1965, when Congress increased Social Security grants without requiring states to pass on this raise to state pension recipients, many states, California included, began to reduce the state pensions by the amount of the Social Security increase. Thus, they "cheated" state pensioners of Congress's intended largesse. Pat Brown, originally sanctioning this practice, reversed himself and included the pass-on in his 1966–67 budget. Reagan, however, in his zeal to squeeze, cut, and trim, deleted it from his 1967–68 budget, and when the legislature passed a bill to extend the pass-on to state pensioners, he vetoed it.⁴⁷ Although the governor would repeat this practice in 1968, soon he would recognize the political disadvantage of inflicting penny-pinching penalties upon a population segment viewed with great sympathy by the general public, and in 1970 he halted his practice of seizing their pay raises.⁴⁸

By 1968 Governor Reagan might well have feared a right-wing backlash to his deviations from—sometimes repudiations of—orthodox conservative politics. Ultra-rightists, such as Orange County Republican Senator John Schmitz, a member of the John Birch Society, tried to incite such a reaction. After berating Reagan for his tax increases, he lent conservative writer Kent Steffgen the services of his administrative assistant, Warren Carroll, which resulted in a cleverly titled book, *Here's the Rest of Him*.⁴⁹ Reagan had published a campaign autobiography in 1965 entitled *Where's the Rest of Me?* which was a climactic line he had uttered in his best-known movie, *King's Row*.

Steffgen now averred that he had examined the hidden portions of Reagan's political anatomy and discovered a liberal in disguise. He found Reagan's billion-dollar tax increase "utterly indefensible,"⁵⁰ a sensitive point which may well have discomfited the governor. Like any other truly committed ideologue (in his own mind, at least), he feared the accusation of having sold out his most sacred principles, even though previous right-wing governors had moved to the center and had increased their political following in the process. Traditionally, the California electorate was moderate rather than extremist and like his predecessors, he had little to lose by such a shift.⁵¹ But Reagan denied that he had become a moderate and fervently rejected Schmitz's charge that his 1967 tax bill had broken faith with his followers, saying, "I'm the stingiest fiscal conservative you ever saw."⁵² Thereafter Reagan ceaselessly asserted that he remained the great conservative, frugal, uncompromising "citizen politician" that he had claimed to be in his 1966 campaign.

Furthermore, he got away with it. Despite the liberal policies and conservative missteps of 1967, Reagan's image has remained as an exemplar of right-wing principles and a reliable polestar of conservative practice. How did he do it? There are a number of possible answers to this question, but the most important is the power of television.⁵³ With an actor's skill, he manipulated that medium's Orwellian capability to dull thought and stimulate emotion, to abjure ideas and emphasize images, to strengthen slogans and weaken reasoned discourse, and to anesthetize memory and convert citizens into political amnesiacs. While pushing through his budget and tax increases of 1967, Reagan simultaneously proclaimed to TV audiences and in public speeches that his administration had constantly effectuated numerous economies in his ongoing policy of "squeeze, cut, and trim." In reality, his cost-cutting policies were trivial: temporary halts on building projects, hiring freezes, sale of the state's airplane and the bridge toll col-

Between 1967 and 1970, Reagan presided over a series of substantial blunders on taxation that might have ended the career of a public figure not blessed with his famous coating of political Teflon.

lectors' revolvers, using office stationery with Pat Brown's name blotted out. But apparently these actions seemed transcendent to his enthralled audiences, who responded as expected to his obvious "sincerity."⁵⁴

Reagan reinforced his frugal and businesslike image through well-publicized utilization of volunteers. These "experts" in finance and administration, usually recruited from the ranks of big business, saved the state "hundreds of millions, possibly billions of dollars," according to Reagan.⁵⁵ Despite the fact that such "task forces" were long-time events in California government, and that the many reports and recommendations they issued mainly seemed to gather dust in the state's archives,⁵⁶ Reagan would have none of this naysaying, even when at least one of them caused him some embarrassment. At one time he released a "stretcher," to use Mark Twain's terminology, saying that one such task force had saved the state \$56 million dollars by recommending practices such as centralizing leasing and space-planning functions; requiring veterans to pay their own return postage for veterans affairs department correspondence; standardizing grades, finishes, weights, and sizes of paper; and promoting state parks, thereby bringing in more admission fees.⁵⁷ No accountant statement accompanied this news release, but apparently no one questioned how such savings were calculated either.

Today it is difficult to recapture the widespread and deep-seated enthusiasm that Reagan's continuous pronouncements of success engendered in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Few seemed



Jesse Unruh and Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, Reagan's predecessor as governor, were leading Democrats during Reagan's two terms as governor. Assembly speaker Unruh, more politically astute than Reagan, was often able to outmaneuver the governor. At times, however, Reagan and his staff forged alliances with Unruh—indicating Reagan's willingness to be pragmatic and move away from his reputation as an ideologue. Unruh and Brown are shown as part of the California delegation at the 1964 Democratic National Convention.

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to doubt that he was saving the state untold millions, and few, except marginalized ultra-rightists such as Schmitz and Steffgen, harped on his increased taxes and budgets. The vast majority of right-wing hard liners, including those in his inner circle, publicly applauded his every move, and a heavy preponderance of the political middle responded to his blandishments to "accept" his "philosophy," as he had urged in 1965.⁵⁸ Peddling his political ideology with enormous and continual success, Reagan induced the California public to forget or ignore the substantive facts of his administration and instead to "buy" his version of reality. "Don't sell the steak; sell the sizzle," a famous apostle of salesmanship once preached,⁵⁹ and Ronald Reagan, intentionally or unintentionally, accepted this doctrine and applied it to politics with notable success.

Reagan profited enormously in 1967 by inducing the public to ignore his political *faux pas*. During the next three years, he presided over a series of substantial blunders on taxation that might have ended the career of a public figure not blessed with his famous coating of political Teflon. Touting the suggestions of his millionaire-ridden "Tax Reform Task Force" in 1968, he was damaged politically when it was revealed that the group proposed to increase revenues by such regressive measures as extending the sales tax to food, utility bills, and personal services such as haircuts. Embarrassed by the denunciations of Unruh and other Democrats, the governor quickly backed away from the proposal and denied that he had favored it in the first place. Immediately afterward, however, he again shot himself in the foot on the income tax issue. His previous year's increases in this tax had borne heavily on middle-income folk, and since his new budget proposed increased expenditures, logic would mandate another tax shift to the upper-income tax brackets.

Following the advice of another well-heeled task force, however, Reagan astoundingly proposed to shift the income tax burden downward so as to give poorer folk an opportunity to pay their fair share. When he described his proposal to the press

an incredulous reporter asked, "Governor, this would be low income people?" "That's right," Reagan replied about a plan which another reporter described as "a vision of Marie Antoinette."⁶⁰ Unruh branded the proposals as "a tax increase of the worst kind . . . on these people who can least afford to pay," adding, "I know no logical thinking political leader or economist in the nation who is advocating we shift the tax burden to the lower income groups."⁶¹ Although embarrassed Republican legislators showed little enthusiasm for the plan, Reagan, with unbounded insouciance, pressured moderate Republican Assemblyman John Veneman to introduce the legislation. The latter deadpanned that he "knew of no opposition to the measure," while Unruh pigeonholed it in the Revenue and Taxation Committee—from which it never emerged.⁶²

Reagan also set himself up for further humiliation on the withholding tax issue, but he was, surprisingly, saved from this fate by Unruh. Having taken a strong ideological "taxes should hurt" stance against withholding in 1967, Reagan now began to realize that withholding offered some distinct political advantages. A new budget crunch threatened because of projected spending increases and a fall-off in tax collections, so any increased revenues were welcome. When John Veneman introduced a bill to inaugurate a withholding system for state income taxes that he estimated would raise more revenue than was needed to cover any projected budget deficit, Reagan announced that he would not oppose the bill since public opinion seemed to favor it. Amazingly, Reagan soon discovered that merely not opposing it wasn't good enough for Unruh, who soon blocked the bill's passage. His objections to the bill were technical and trivial, and it soon became apparent that Unruh sought to force the governor to eat crow and overtly request the legislature to pass the bill. Reagan refused to do this, and, incredibly, the bill died in the assembly's Committee on Revenue and Taxation.⁶³ This proved to be a rare instance when Unruh outdid the governor

in political foolishness. Reagan emerged with his ideological integrity intact by refusing to demand passage of a bill that violated his principles, whereas Unruh passed up an opportunity to win an extremely important political victory.⁶⁴

The perennial issue of property tax relief, however, again forced the speaker and the governor into a short-lived but effective alliance. During the first half of 1968, Reagan, Unruh, and the latter's great legislative rival, liberal Senator George Miller, quarreled over the issue. But the June qualification of the Watson amendment (Proposition 9 for the November ballot) encouraged partisan cooperation.⁶⁵ This initiative, like the revolutionary Jarvis-Gann amendment ten years later, proposed to freeze all property tax assessments at one percent of actual value. The revenue shortfall that would result from this measure would have been so great that Reagan, Unruh, Miller, and most other legislators agreed that a special session for legislative action must take place.

Recognizing that California voters, especially homeowners, had to be given a powerful inducement to vote against Proposition 9, the three leaders produced a legislative package (a bill passed by the legislature and a constitutional amendment to be approved by the voters known as Proposition 1-a), which provided \$164 million in property tax relief for families in owner-occupied homes (through a homeowner's exemption of \$750), \$40 million in tax relief for renters, another \$40 million in business inventory tax reductions, and the elimination of the tax on household goods and furnishings.⁶⁶ When Proposition 1-a passed by a 53.4 percent majority of the voters, while Watson's Proposition 9 lost by a margin of 68 percent to 32 percent,⁶⁷ it was widely hailed as a triumph for Reagan and Senator Miller, even through Unruh's input into the measure was unquestionably the strongest. The package contained features strenuously but unsuccessfully advocated by Unruh for the past several years, while Reagan was a Johnny-come-lately to the subject of property tax reduction, and Miller had been a dedicated opponent of it.⁶⁸

This was neither the first nor the last time that the governor would receive sole public credit for policies in which he was only partly involved.

The year 1968 also culminated in an electoral triumph for Reagan and the Republicans and a shellacking for Unruh and the Democrats. Unruh made a no-holds-barred political and emotional investment in Robert Kennedy's presidential quest, contributing heavily to his party's state and national disarray in the process. He was so devastated by his hero's assassination that his stumbling undermined Hubert Humphrey's presidential candidacy (against Richard Nixon) within the state and even led to loss of Democratic control in the legislature, terminating his tenure as assembly speaker. Reagan, by contrast, made an inept if brief and harmless bid for the presidential nomination and then campaigned effectively for his fellow Republicans in the state and nation.⁶⁹ Now, he presumably could run the state with his party in control of the legislature and himself in command of the statehouse.⁷⁰ The governor's press secretary Lyn Nofziger soon declared that "1969 has got to be the most important year yet. It has to be a year of accomplishment for him."⁷¹

Unsurprisingly, however, the two sessions (1969 and 1970) when Reagan enjoyed a Republican majority in the legislature proved to be among the most unproductive on record. Reagan, given his ideological devotion to right-wing principles, had no substantial legislative agenda. Like Barry Goldwater before him, his commitment was to reduce, not expand, the scope of government activity. His celebrated policy of squeeze, cut, and trim was presumably designed to weaken the power of government, not strengthen it, and he therefore came to power largely bereft of a positive program.⁷² Cannon finds other reasons for this legislative paucity: "In the only two years of Reagan's governorship that Republicans had control of the legislature, the Senate was too unstable and the Assembly too divided for major legislative accomplishments."⁷³ Cannon adds that in 1969 the governor "... took refuge in small accomplishments," one of which was "a mild bill

aimed at restricting legislative conflicts of interest, essentially a response to the alarms sounded by Senator Way and others about excessive lobbyist influence."⁷⁴ This is grossly misleading, for the "mild bill" referred to was not Reagan's, but Jesse Unruh's AB 325, which, despite his newly acquired minority leader (and supposedly weakened) status, he steered through the legislature and onto the governor's desk in just six months.⁷⁵

Unruh, the long-time collector and dispenser of lobbyist money, which he had famously described as the "mother's milk of politics," had long been an opponent of conflict-of-interest legislation.⁷⁶ A recent disclosure of a flagrant conflict of this sort on the part of Senate President *Pro Tempore* Hugh Burns, however, had caused Unruh to believe that public opinion would no longer tolerate a blasé attitude toward the subject.⁷⁷ Unruh had long enjoyed a cordial relationship with Burns, a fellow Democrat, albeit a notoriously conservative and lobby-friendly one, but now the two had become estranged, especially after Burns became more and more pro-Reagan at Unruh's expense.⁷⁸ Unruh, events proved, had gauged public opinion accurately and doubtless enjoyed the discomfiture of both Burns and Reagan when confronting this bill, especially since Burns felt compelled to vote for the conflict of interest bill and Reagan to sign it when it reached his desk.⁷⁹ To say that the governor "took refuge" in this particular "small accomplishment" is an abuse of language.⁸⁰

This gubernatorial embarrassment was small potatoes compared to Reagan's setbacks on fiscal affairs in 1969. Unruh and the Democrats waged a budget battle with him over education funding, even blocking the budget's passage beyond the end of the fiscal year on the first day of July.⁸¹ Although now practically an annual rite, this budget holdup was shocking at the time, and Reagan called it "the single most irresponsible act in the history of California state government." The Democrats forced the administration to make a concession authorizing additional education funding pegged to any treasury surplus and then voted for the budget on July 3.

What first appeared as a face-saving measure soon turned into a Democratic victory when the state controller released figures showing growing surpluses of tens of millions of dollars, enabling Unruh to crow: "Thanks to our action in July, the public schools of this state will receive an extra \$79.8 million that Governor Reagan would have denied them if we had not held up the passage of the budget."⁸² If the treasury surpluses were caused by Reagan's policy of squeeze, cut, and trim, as the Republicans proclaimed, it was galling to have the Democrats channel them into additional spending.

If Reagan endured a partial defeat on the budget, he suffered a total one on tax reform. As previously noted, Reagan and Unruh, despite their enormous political differences and mutual dislike, shared a meeting of minds on tax reform: They both believed in shifting the burden of taxation from property owners to more progressive sources, that is, incomes and retail sales, the latter considered progressive in California because of its exemption on food and prescription drugs. His commitment to property tax reform was the major exception to the liberals' oft-repeated assertion that Reagan had no significant political agenda.

After a couple of false starts on tax reform proposals, Reagan eventually produced one in April 1969.⁸³ Unlike Unruh, who had proposed tax shifts in 1965 and 1966 only after prolonged and well publicized researches and appeals, Reagan suddenly sprang his tax plan on April 8, 1969, apparently a product of confidential deliberations among members in his department of finance.⁸⁴ Personally lacking any in-depth knowledge about the state tax system's specifics, he allowed the bureaucrats to devise tax proposals presumably in line with his ideological preconceptions.⁸⁵ Even so, his program was surprising to many.

Proclaiming that his plan "... would shift the main tax incidence from the inelastic, regressive property tax to the more equitable income tax," he proposed a package of no fewer than nine bills and four constitutional amendments.⁸⁶ In addition to many technical details, the measures

With an actor's skill, Reagan manipulated TV's Orwellian capability to dull thought and stimulate emotion, to abjure ideas and emphasize images, to strengthen slogans and weaken reasoned discourse, and to anesthetize memory and convert citizens into political amnesiacs.

would increase the annual homeowner's exemption from \$750 to \$1,000; reduce business inventory taxes by 23 percent; reduce many sales tax exemptions and extend the tax to news magazines and containers; levy a one percent tax on all adjusted gross incomes and a statewide nonresidential property tax, both to be spent on educational funding; establish a capital gains tax, amount not specified; establish a "nonmandatory" withholding tax system; and reduce property taxes on senior citizens.

Although the package contained some regressive features, the across-the-board one percent income tax being the most obvious, on the whole it was a progressive proposal, which many liberals might celebrate and conservatives condemn. Instead, liberal Democrats, such as Unruh, immediately and volubly castigated certain features of the plan, while most legislative conservatives responded only weakly, and by their near-silence signaled their dissatisfaction with it as well. Other Republicans and their related special interest groups—such as the California Taxpayers Association, the California Retailers Association, the California Manufacturers Association, and the California Real Estate Association—became highly vocal in their opposition as did other powerful, though less partisan, organizations such as the County Supervisors Association, the School Administrators



Environmentalists feared and developers hoped that conservation efforts would get short shrift from the Reagan administration. Reagan surprised both groups by supporting a series of projects that marked him as a consistent, if moderate, environmentalist. Left to right: Governor Ronald Reagan, Assemblyman Frank Belotti, Resources Secretary Norman B. Livermore, Newton B. Drury, State Senator Ralph Collier, John B. Dewitt, and Ralph Chaney inspect maps presented by the Save-the-Redwoods League in their gift of funds to the state for the acquisition of Pepperwood Forest.

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Legislative Office, the League of California Cities, and the League of Women Voters of California. Reagan ineptly tried to refute the objections to his plan by issuing a "guarantee . . . to the people of California" that his plan would not result in any net tax increases to anyone when it was plain that no such guarantee could be valid in such a complex proposal as this.⁸⁷ He also confusedly asserted that his "voluntary withholding" proposal did not undermine his ideological objection to withholding in principle and to his "taxes should hurt" mantra, saying "my feet have never been firmer in concrete than they are at this moment about that."⁸⁸

When Unruh realized that his Republican brethren in the legislature were embarrassed by the governor's tax plan and might bury it in committee, he and the Democrats suddenly took an about face and declared their "support" for the plan and pledged their "assistance" to the governor in "freeing" it from the toils of the assembly ways and means committee. This amounted to partisan chutzpah in the extreme, for all observers realized that the Democrats had no intention of voting for Reagan's plan but merely wished to bring it to a vote and enjoy the spectacle of many Republicans agonizingly opposing it. William Bagley, the liberal Republican chair of the assembly ways and means committee, feared that the split-roll aspect of the property tax feature would anger agricultural landowners, and when legislative analyst A. Alan Post proposed eliminating the oil depletion allowance instead of raising income taxes, Bagley estimated that this would produce "20 or 30 no votes" in the assembly.⁸⁹ The governor seemed majestically oblivious to the political binds in which he was placing his legislative colleagues and disdainful of the possibility that he was threatening their careers, and even his own. Since the Democrats refused to aid the Republicans in the legislature in modifying the program to make it more palatable, the latter, according to political reporter Richard Rodda, found themselves "caught in the position of 'saving' the governor from his own tax program

since it had so many bugs in it."⁹⁰ The entire program thus wasted away in committee. When assembly speaker Robert Monagan announced in August that he was placing the subject of tax reform on the calendars of various "interim studies," that is, in future sessions, the end had come. The speaker also ruefully reflected on the affair: "Suddenly they [the Democrats] were advocates of the governor's tax program, while the Republican leadership was against it. I must say this was not too bad as a political maneuver."⁹¹

Having displayed a monumental ineptitude in securing tax reform in 1969, Reagan astoundingly stuck his head into the same noose the following year, with the same results. Again—without advance notice of substantial proposed changes in the tax structure or efforts to placate the opposition of influential groups certain to oppose them—he introduced another remarkably progressive tax package on February 4, 1970. The big news about his plan was that he called specifically for income tax withholding, wittily accompanying his announcement with the words: "That sound you hear is the concrete cracking around my feet."

Unruh had at last won his two-year tug-of-war to induce the governor to ask the legislature for a withholding bill, but the most important features of the plan extended far beyond. Reagan also called for substantial increases in taxes on retail sales, incomes, capital gains, banks, corporations, and oil and gas extraction, the latter by reducing the depletion allowance. These increased revenues were to be offset by additional reduction in residential property and business inventory taxes, the introduction of a system of renters' credits, and additional state assumption of county welfare and Medi-Cal costs. On the whole, it was another basically progressive measure, but, like all such complex plans, the devil was in the details. Democrats discovered a number of regressive aspects while many Republicans sullenly and secretly let it be known that they disliked the plan even though its "overall effect . . . would be to bolster the political position of their favorite governor."⁹² There was much public support for the

The year 1970 was a very good one for Ronald Reagan—it ended with his reelection and the removal of Jesse Unruh, his political nemesis, from the political scene for the remainder of his administration.

plan, however, as well as for the popular governor who pushed it. What he needed to do was to involve himself in legislative negotiations on various proposed amendments and counter-measures accompanying Assemblyman Bagley's support of Reagan's plans, the latter being embodied in his AB1000 and AB1001.⁹³

This, however, the governor resolutely refused to do. Apparently repelled by such involvement in the grubby give-and-take of legislative bargaining and trade-offs, he prided himself in holding aloof from backroom deals of this sort, even admitting: "maybe if I did we would have a tax program."⁹⁴ Maybe, indeed, for on August 20 AB 1001 failed by one vote, the key negative vote being cast by the highly conservative Republican Clark Bradley, often considered the "conscience" of his party.⁹⁵ Since the bill would have passed but for the fact that one Democrat, Senator Thomas Carrell, was on record as favoring it but could not vote because he was in the hospital, Reagan railed at the other Democrats opposing the bill, because none of them would give the bill a "courtesy" aye vote on Carrell's behalf.⁹⁶ There were good parliamentary reasons for not doing this, however, and Reagan would have been better advised to have agreed to minor changes in the law, thus earning the support of another Democrat.⁹⁷ Seven Democrats actually voted for the bill, and others were still pushing for minor amendments on the day of its demise. They got no encouragement from Reagan, however, and he later said he would not have accepted any significant changes if they had

been made.⁹⁸ Bagley had admitted that he and "the governor's office" were pressuring legislators on behalf of AB 1001,⁹⁹ but Reagan, despite his experience as a negotiator in the Screen Actors Guild, seemed unwilling to bargain with individual legislators. The essence of the political deal — to get something, give up something — seemed to escape him, and he allowed a major effort at tax reform to fail for no good reason. A greater act of large-scale legislative folly is hard to imagine. The following year, 1970 (when he was 59), a very good year for Ronald Reagan, for it ended with his reelection and the removal of his political nemesis, Jesse Unruh, from the political scene for the remainder of his administration. According to Cannon, Unruh was hopelessly outmatched from the beginning in his gubernatorial bid against the "Great Communicator," especially after he inaugurated his fall campaign with a "self-inflicted wound"—his sensational confrontation with Reagan advisor Henry Salvatori at his Bel-Air Mansion.¹⁰⁰ Cannon obviously found this bit of campaign theater personally offensive, as did many others in the general population, but that did not necessarily make it a bad tactic. Probably the ablest analysis of this election concludes: "It is possible that those who found such advertising gauche were not Unruh enthusiasts anyway, and political professionals lauded the ingenuity which produced a gold mine of free exposure to the electorate."¹⁰¹ This and a barrage of other surprise gambits that Unruh pulled off during this campaign indicate that Unruh must have done something right, since he halved the vote margin by which Reagan had defeated Pat Brown four years earlier, while being outspent by Reagan by at least a three-to-one ratio.¹⁰² Moreover, Unruh and the Democrats astounded the pundits by retaking control of both houses of the legislature in an election upset that reflected badly on the political competence of Reagan and the California Republicans. Although 1970 was a good year for Reagan, it was a very bad one for his Republican brethren in the state.¹⁰³

The Republicans, under their Cal-Plan inaugurated by their able party Chairman Gaylord Park

inson in 1963, had regularly picked off more and more Democratic seats in the elections of 1964, 1966, and 1968 (as well as in several irregular by-elections) and in the latter year, as we have seen, gained majorities in both houses.¹⁰⁴ Although in hindsight they would say they had peaked too early, the Republican officialdom, encouraged by the pronouncements of various pundits, expected to widen their lead in both houses in 1970 because of the traditional coattail effect caused by the reelection of a popular gubernatorial incumbent.¹⁰⁵ Unfortunately for them, Reagan and the Republican legislative leaders disagreed over how to achieve this result.

Reagan, as a right-wing ideologue, was never close to leaders such as assemblymen William Bagley, John Veneman, and speaker Robert Monagan because he regarded them as "liberals" and thus untrustworthy.¹⁰⁶ Conversely, they regarded Reagan as destructive to relationships with their constituents, who were more moderate than the governor and resentful of his budget cuts and his demands that volunteer Republican organizations vociferously support his right-wing policies and pronouncements.¹⁰⁷ For these reasons they wished to keep Reagan at arm's length from specific legislative races and to use him primarily as a fund raiser and inspirational speaker at party rallies.¹⁰⁸ Reagan, however, insisted on entering specific districts of Democratic legislators who had opposed his program, especially the eleven Democratic senators who had helped kill his recent tax reform plan, (he conveniently forgot about Republican Clark Bradley who had led the movement) and enjoining the voters to turn them out of office.¹⁰⁹ Columnist Richard Rodda predicted accurately that "The governor's attempt to purge the senators who opposed him will backfire if history repeats itself. The late Franklin D. Roosevelt found this out the hard way,"¹¹⁰ but Reagan paid no attention and thus largely wasted his energy in the 1970 legislative elections.

Ironically, when Republican legislators and the governor cooperated on an agreed-upon strategy, they did so incompetently and failed again. The

issue this time was whether to hold a large-scale voter registration drive in 1970. Despite the Republicans' growing political strength in recent years, California was still a heavily Democratic state, the most recent figures showing the statewide party registration as Democrats, 54.2 percent; Republicans, 41 percent.¹¹¹ Instead of going all-out to narrow the registration gap, the Republicans decided to hold only limited and narrowly focused drives, whereas the Democrats, led by Unruh, who pledged \$100,000 from his own sparse campaign treasury, engineered a massive registration drive.¹¹² With his pollsters telling him that he was trailing Reagan by around a million votes, Unruh thought that increased registration might be his best chance to narrow the lead, and in fact, his loss by only one-half million votes was largely attributable to his gamble with the campaign treasury and voter registration.¹¹³

The legislative Democrats won a smashing victory. Reagan failed to unseat a single Democratic senator, and two Republican senators lost their seats instead. In the assembly the resurgent Democrats held onto all of their seats and defeated five incumbent Republicans. After a brief two years as the minority party in the legislature they regained control of both houses (21-19 in the Senate, 43-37 in the Assembly), and except for a brief interlude in the mid-1990s, they have held it ever since.¹¹⁴ Because this crucial election also helped the Democrats gain control of the reapportionment process in 1971, Unruh took great pride in it, even though he was now out of office. Commenting on the election which gave his rival four more years in power, he said: "We cut off his coattails clear up to the lapels."¹¹⁵

If Governor Reagan expected an easier time with the legislature in 1971 because he no longer had to face the dreaded Unruh, he was soon disillusioned. The Democrats chose Robert Moretti, a protege of Unruh's, as assembly speaker.¹¹⁶ James Mills, another long-time Unruh legislative associate, gained the position of Senate President *Pro Tempore*.¹¹⁷ To his considerable credit, in his second term Reagan chose to deal head-to-head

with his legislative adversaries in sustained bargaining sessions, reversing his fatal aloofness of previous years. This resulted in the passage of some significant legislation, though it did little to convert the governor into the conservative-in-action as well as in thought, which he dearly desired to be. Some would argue, however, the California Welfare Reform Law of 1971 stands as a striking exception to this assertion. "Before passage of the welfare law," Cannon asserts, "Reagan had been their [the conservatives'] champion because of his inspirational expression of conservative values; afterward, he was increasingly celebrated as a governor who made a difference."¹¹⁸ Cannon shows that the law was no triumph of right-wing policy, but rather a typically Californian exercise in moderation hammered out by Reagan and Moretti and their respective adherents. "As a product of compromise, it necessarily contained something for everyone; what made the law distinctive was that it incorporated many of the best features of both Republican and Democratic welfare proposals."¹¹⁹ Although, as Cannon notes, "Reagan received a disproportionate share of the credit" for the bill's passage and his admirers insisted on viewing his handiwork as slaying the welfare "monster"¹²⁰ by mowing down "welfare cheats," in reality eighty percent of the "honest welfare recipients . . . had their grants increased"¹²¹ and the law brought no massive long-term decline in the welfare case load.¹²² The law was a creditable piece of legislation, but it represents no clear-cut ideological victories to either left or right.¹²³

In 1971 and 1972 Reagan again struggled with fiscal issues and again found himself making concessions and compromises at the expense of his ideology. Government costs and Reagan's budgets had continued to rise, and revenues stagnated in this era of "Nixonomics." The governor was caught in the disquieting position of seeking tax increases as well as withholding in order to afford more residential property tax relief and to equalize education funding now mandated by the troublesome supreme court decision of *Serrano v. Priest* (1971).¹²⁴ The legislature stalled over a

comprehensive tax package in 1971, and Reagan had to settle for a bill that at last implemented withholding, increased bank and corporation taxes and established three new income tax brackets of 9, 10, and 11 percent.¹²⁵ In 1972 a second effort by Phillip Watson, known as Watson II, threatened another assault on California public finance mainly by radical reductions in property taxes, and Reagan, in a statesmanlike way, "denounced Watson II and tried to use it as a lever to pry a property tax relief bill out of the legislature."¹²⁶ Although this did not work out quite the way Reagan intended, his action certainly amounted to a vastly more intelligent exercise of executive power than that of his successor when confronted with Jarvis-Gann six years later. By directly opposing the Watson initiative (Proposition 13 on the November 1972 ballot) Reagan contributed to its defeat and, again in cooperation with Moretti, helped to bring about the tax compromise of 1972.

The final revenue and expenditure measure that year (SB 90) brought seemingly massive property tax relief by more than doubling the homeowner's exemption in the 1968 law (from \$750 to \$1,750) as well as increasing the renter's credit.¹²⁷ It also provided large amounts of direct aid for schools, and the only tax increments were a penny rise on retail sales (5 to 6 percent) and a slight increase in bank and corporation taxes. Added to the large income tax increases of the year before, along with those of 1967, they still amounted to a record of vast "revenue enhancements" that must have afforded the governor little comfort, even though he could probably rely on the tried-and-true combination of "squeeze, cut, and trim" rhetoric and voter amnesia to escape public censure for them. His spending record was no more reassuring, his 1971–1972 fiscal year budget of \$6.8 billion increasing to \$7.9 billion in fiscal 1972–1973. And when he left office in early 1975 his final budget would pass the \$10 billion mark, more than twice the size of the last budget of his predecessor, the allegedly "spendthrift" Pat Brown, if one recalled Reagan's campaign rhetoric of 1966.¹²⁸ Finally, by 1973 the dominant Democrats were presented

with an opportunity to substantially increase spending, because the Reagan-Moretti tax increases of 1971–1972 began to generate treasury surpluses of ever-increasing amounts.¹²⁹ Confronted with this embarrassment of riches Reagan felt impelled to do something dramatic to block the threat of a spending orgy and to restore his image as a great economizer.

He staked his hopes on his Proposition 1 initiative of 1973, the campaign that brought him to his highest pinnacle of ineptitude.¹³⁰ Lou Cannon makes no effort to defend this classic blunder, instead describing it as “a cautionary tale about the dangers of indulging ideology at the expense of common sense.”¹³¹ The episode, ideologically speaking, was a confession of failure, since Reagan had manifestly failed to keep his promise to reduce the cost of government in almost seven years in the governor’s office. His many well-publicized item vetoes in budget after budget proved minuscule compared to the irresistibly rising tide of annual expenditure. Unwilling to admit that he had habitually yielded to pressures to spend and often politically profited from spending bills,¹³² nevertheless, he now sought a constitutional mandate to restrain his and the legislature’s hands. It was a sort of subliminal “Stop Me Before I Spend Again” plea to the voters.

Furthermore, Reagan seemed intellectually unable to revise his preconceptions about the desirability of reduced expenditures in a time of inflation, population expansion, economic growth, and social change, but instead sought to use the constitution to sustain his ideology, which he could not sustain otherwise. The proposed constitutional amendment in Proposition 1 had many authors, but seems to have been mainly the brainchild of Lewis K. Uhler, an extreme right-wing conservative and former John Birch Society member, assisted by Reagan’s chief of staff Edwin Meese, ordinarily a much more clear-headed conservative than he appeared in this case. Numbingly complex in its details, the essence of the proposition was to bind the annual state expenditure increase to no more than an arbitrarily chosen

Reagan endorsed Jarvis-Gann as soon as it qualified for the ballot late in 1977, expressed satisfaction when it passed, and declared that his sponsorship of Proposition 1 in 1973 had paved the way for its success.

seven percent of the state’s personal income. The state would be thus coerced into an annual fiscal straitjacket without regard to its actual needs. A more thorough operational triumph of ideology over pragmatism could scarcely be imagined. Perhaps this explained the governor’s exuberant enthusiasm for his handiwork, and his joy at raising huge sums of money for its campaign.¹³³

Governor Reagan also innocently assumed that since he had cooperated with Moretti in the passage of the recent tax measures, he would be able to count on the Speaker’s support in the Proposition 1 campaign. Instead, Moretti energetically led the campaign against it, focusing especially on the measure’s inordinate complexity and relying on the voters’ established tendency to reject what they did not understand. Reagan, in a moment of befuddlement more advanced than usual, played into Moretti’s hands by admitting on television that he didn’t understand it either! This came late in the campaign, when polls indicated that the effort was already losing, but the governor’s airy confession of ignorance unquestionably contributed further to its defeat. It failed on November 4, 1973, by a vote of 54 to 46 percent and placed the governor on the political defensive for the remainder of his tenure.¹³⁴

On the national scene, Reagan suffered little from this California setback during his last year in office in 1974. He was already gearing up for a presidential run two years later and was soon on

the hustings, over the airways, and in newsprint preaching again his gospel of right-wing rhetoric, which his actual record seemed to belie. His fellow Republicans in California, however, were left in the dust of his national political bandwagon, where, for the most part, they remain. His awkward attempt to aid them by vetoing the Democrats' reapportionment bill in 1971 availed them nothing, as the Democrats increased their legislative strength under a court-ordered reapportionment in 1972.¹³⁵ In 1974, under the impact of the Watergate malaise, the Democrats, led by gubernatorial candidate Edmund G. "Jerry" Brown, gained every constitutional office except that of attorney general, increased their majority of congressional seats, and won near veto-proof majorities in the state assembly and senate.¹³⁶ No other governor in California history so advantaged himself by holding the office and so disadvantaged his party at the same time. His defeat in his quest for the Republican presidential nomination in 1976, however, also threatened him with political oblivion, but an unforeseen set of circumstances propelled him back into prominence.¹³⁷

Among these circumstances, as Cannon points out, was Reagan's dogged determination to keep himself in the public eye and his strenuous and successful efforts to build and maintain a nationwide organization dedicated to a repeat candidacy in 1980.¹³⁸ Similarly, the decision of ex-president Ford not to run again and the comparative weakness of the other Republican aspirants also aided Reagan's efforts, to say nothing of the accumulating foreign and domestic disasters of the Jimmy Carter administration.¹³⁹ But Cannon treats rather lightly an event that others might regard as Reagan's greatest unexpected boon during these years; another gift from the Golden State: the Jarvis-Gann revolution of 1978.¹⁴⁰

In the primary election of 1978 the Jarvis-Gann Amendment, Proposition 13, was bestowed upon Reagan and the California Republicans by Governor Jerry Brown and the Democratic majority in

the legislature, all seemingly suffering from a temporary condition of mental disturbance. As noted above, the Reagan-Moretti tax increases of 1971-1972 began bringing in substantial treasury surpluses by mid-decade, and the Democrats, like Reagan, strangely began to view the surplus as a problem rather than as an opportunity. Their liberal political philosophy told them that surpluses, rare as they are, should not be hoarded but spent on worthy causes, and there were plenty of the latter to choose from. Education spending per pupil had substantially declined during the Reagan years, and the added problems of the 1971 *Serrano v. Priest* supreme court decision calling for inter-district spending equalization, indicated that public education required enormous support. A declining mental health care system was also ripe for rescue. Costly needs for the state's infrastructure, especially highways, were soon manifested. And, most urgently, the state still lacked a permanent "fix" of the property tax system to save low and moderate-income homeowners from ruinous tax increases triggered by inflation and unrealistic assessment growth. The Unruh-Reagan tax shifts and homeowner exemptions of 1967, 1968, and 1972 had proved to provide only temporary property tax relief. A permanent restructuring, particularly a "split-roll" differentiation between business and residential taxes, was called for, with some treasury surplus funds used to replace the reduced property tax revenues.

The threatened penalty for failing to deal with the property tax issue had become clear long before Howard Jarvis and Paul Gann qualified their initiative for the June 1978 ballot. Proposition 13 was an extreme version of the defeated Watson amendments of 1968 and 1972, which Reagan and the Democrats together had adamantly and successfully opposed. They had persuaded the voters that the loss of property tax revenue under the Watson amendments would cripple many state services and force large increases in other taxes. If the Democrats did not now dispose of the large surpluses they would be deprived of this argument and

voters would seem to have nothing to lose and much to gain by voting for Jarvis-Gann. Incredibly, the Democrats dawdled instead of acting, and the initiative passed. Jerry Brown, already a turncoat liberal on fiscal affairs, tried to ride the right-wing reaction engendered by Jarvis-Gann into national prominence, but soon found himself politically unhorsed and marginalized.¹⁴¹ The great gainer in the Jarvis-Gann triumph was Ronald Reagan.

Prior to the passage of Jarvis-Gann, Reagan had been busily engaging his growing national audience in what Cannon cogently describes as a "comic-book version of the history of the Reagan governorship."¹⁴² Unsurprisingly this larger public proved easily as gullible as the California electorate had earlier proved to be, and it "marveled at the former governor's stirring stories of how he had returned the state to fiscal solvency and achieved welfare reform and property tax relief by arousing the public to support him against a Democratic Legislature."¹⁴³ Reagan endorsed Jarvis-Gann as soon as it qualified for the ballot late in 1977, expressed satisfaction when it passed, and declared that his sponsorship of Proposition 1 in 1973 had paved the way for its success.¹⁴⁴ In so doing Reagan bestowed his last great "gift" upon his home state, for which every rational being there could reasonably regard him with enduring opprobrium: the political consolidation of a virulent "new theology" against taxation so extreme that it has become effectively anti-government, even anti-political.¹⁴⁵ Nor did the process stop there, for Jarvis-Gann soon spread nationwide, even worldwide,¹⁴⁶ and Reagan, by attaching himself to it, gained an incalculable advantage in his successful race to the White House in 1980. The rest, as the saying goes, is history.

Ronald Reagan's reputation as a giant of American conservatism has grown even larger since leaving the governor's office. And no public figure of that political persuasion is willing to tolerate the proposition that he was largely a counterfeit conservative in Sacramento. Preaching conser-

vatism, he practiced California's characteristic pragmatism as well as moderate activism in the governor's chair, along with steady and substantial admixtures of political ignorance and incompetence. Even so, in spite of himself and his professed principles, he presided inadvertently over a more accomplished and fruitful administration than that of any of his successors, and he arguably ranks as the state's best governor since Pat Brown, whom he resembled more than he knew or was willing to acknowledge.¹⁴⁷ The main difference was that Brown took pride in his progressive achievements and Reagan took pains to deny and conceal his. Furthermore, the lackluster performances of governors Brown II, Deukmejian, Wilson, and Davis (Schwarzenegger having not yet demonstrated his natural level of competence or incompetence) are partly attributable to the "new theology" of political nihilism that Reagan helped to inflict upon the state. Thus his image as a pillar of conservatism and a gifted political leader seems unshakable in the public mind. Nor is this surprising, for the California public has persistently preferred political fantasy over reality during the past forty years.

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Arturo Tirado and the Teatro Azteca:

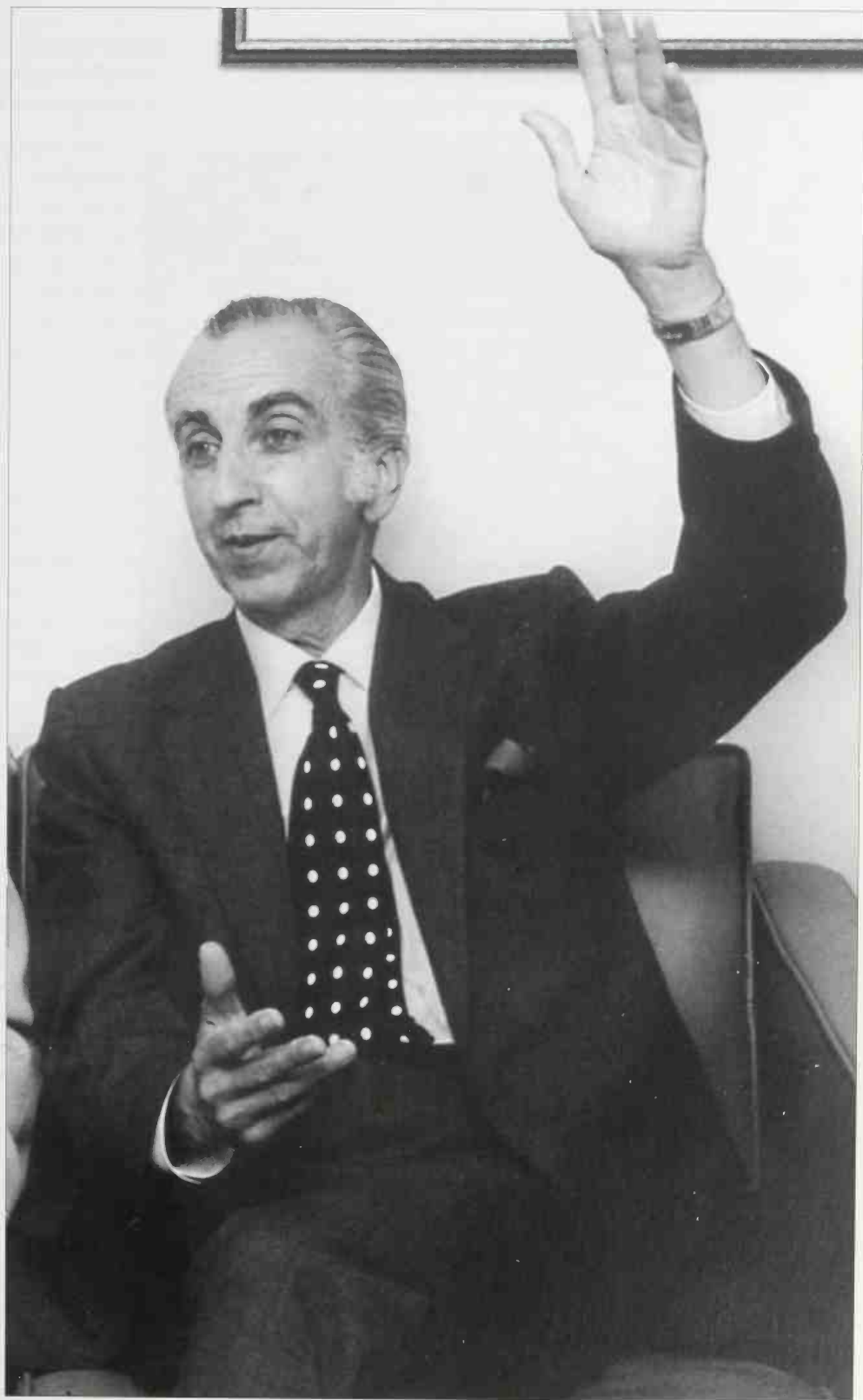
Mexican Popular Culture in the Central San Joaquin Valley

By Manuel G. Gonzales

Imagine going to a movie house in a small western town in the 1940s and 1950s and seeing Clark Gable, Cary Grant, and Katharine Hepburn performing live before packed audiences. Sounds incredible, but this was exactly the experience of many Mexican workers in the San Joaquin Valley during those halcyon years. Predominantly *campesinos* (farm workers), they had the good fortune to see the most famous names on the silver screen perform in the most unlikely of venues, places such as the Teatro Azteca in Fresno. No, the performers were not the celebrated stars of Hollywood. To these audiences, first- and second-generation immigrants from Mexico, they were even bigger celebrities—Cantinflas, Pedro Infante, María Félix, and the other great actors and actresses of the Golden Age of Mexican cinema. The appearance of these luminaries on American stages was made possible through the efforts of a small group of influential theater owners and managers whose impact on Mexican-American popular culture has been largely forgotten. One of the most representative of these individuals was the owner of the Teatro Azteca, Arturo Romualdo Tirado. This Mexican immigrant came to be one of the most active and civic-minded citizens of the San Joaquin Valley, and his life illuminates many interesting facets of the Mexican-American experience in central California during the twentieth century.

Although largely absent from history textbooks, this experience has had a dramatic impact on modern-day society. Today, following decades of continuous immigration from south of the border,

what residents simply call “the Valley” is home to one of the largest Spanish-speaking populations in the United States.¹ Towns that were only marginally Latino in the 1950s are now predominantly Spanish-speaking, and those that supported large Latino populations then are now overwhelmingly Hispanic—much to the chagrin of many of the region’s long-established Anglo-American residents.² Even though Spanish-speaking settlers have resided in the region since the beginning of the nineteenth century—Las Juntas, near the Fresno County community of Mendota, was settled “as early as 1800” by Mexicans, making it the first non-Indian community in the Great Central Valley³—their history has generally been neglected by mainstream scholars. Local historical societies invariably concentrate on the “real” pioneers: the Anglo Americans who established the first Valley towns, the so-called city fathers. With few exceptions, Chicano researchers have also largely failed to address this important segment of the ethnic community.⁴ This neglect is surprising, given not only the size and importance of the Valley’s Mexican population, but also that so many Chicano studies scholars hail from the region, notably Alex Saragoza, Lea Ybarra, F. Arturo Rosales, Ramón Chacón, Francisco Jiménez, and Charley Trujillo. An investigation into the folkways that developed among the Valley’s Mexican immigrants is particularly needed. By centering on the life of a key player in that development, Arturo Tirado, and focusing on the role of the Mexican cinema, this essay attempts to portray Hispanic popular culture at mid-century.



Arturo Tirado was born into a show business family in Mexico City. He owned and operated Fresno's thriving Teatro Azteca from 1956 to 1980. He is shown here in Fresno in the late 1960s or early 1970s.

COURTESY OF MR. JORGE ACUÑA

FRESNO

To appreciate how Tirado and other Spanish-speaking impresarios affected their ethnic communities, it is first necessary to examine the origins of their clientele, what is widely termed the “Hispanic market” today. The Mexican Revolution witnessed a massive influx of Mexican immigrants into the American Southwest, first into Texas and then into southern California. However, it was only in the 1920s—when the construction of Highway 99 permitted easy access from the Los Angeles basin across the Tejon Pass—that these immigrants began to enter the San Joaquin Valley in significant numbers.

By 1900, agriculture had become the leading industry in California.⁵ Not yet mechanized, the harvest of fruits, vegetables, and other crops required huge numbers of people willing to work as cheap labor. Mexicans entering the Valley in the 1920s, mainly from the Imperial Valley and the Los Angeles basin, were almost exclusively campesinos. They were drawn to citrus and other orchard crops along the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada, the grape fields in and around Fresno, and, increasingly, the cotton lands of the Westside.⁶ By the early 1930s, Mexicans represented 56 percent of the agricultural work force in the Valley.⁷

During the course of the 1920s, the expanding fields of the westlands became the leading magnet for *Mexicanos* (the most popular self-referent at the time among the Mexican-origin population in the United States). In contrast to the small family farms east of Highway 99, large corporate holdings came to dominate this arid region of the Central Valley because of the massive capital outlay required for deep wells and expensive irrigation projects, and these “factory farms”—as Carey McWilliams labeled them—depended on whole armies of unskilled laborers. Cotton culture, moreover, as the historian Kevin Starr has pointed out, demands an abundance of labor given the multitude of tasks involved: chopping, hoeing, irrigating, and picking.⁸ In time, utilizing cheap Mexican and Filipino labor, veritable eco-

nomic empires were established in the western cotton belt by pioneering corporate farmers such as the Giffens and the Boswells.⁹

The Great Depression hit the Valley’s Mexicans especially hard.¹⁰ There were massive deportations. As many as half a million Mexicans living in the United States may have returned to their homeland during this time of troubles, and only about half did so voluntarily.¹¹ In addition, there was the intense competition represented by Dust Bowl immigrants, most of them looking for jobs in the glutted rural labor market; by mid-1934, it has been reported, there were 141 workers in the state for every one hundred agricultural jobs.¹² These setbacks, however, only served to slow down the process of Hispanic immigration from the south, not shut it off completely. Then World War II stimulated agricultural output in the state to unprecedented heights, putting a premium on Mexican farm labor. Spanish-speaking communities in the Valley were augmented, too, by an influx of *braceros* (contract laborers from Mexico) after 1942, many of whom stayed in the United States illegally after their contracts expired.

By the end of the war it was clear that the children of most immigrants, if not the immigrants themselves, had given up the dream of returning to the land they had nostalgically referred to as *México lindo* (“beautiful Mexico”); they were in the Valley to stay. By mid-century, Mexicanos were found in fledgling rural communities up and down the Valley—Corcoran, Sanger, Parlier, Mendota, Huron, Turlock, and other small towns that now became the focal points for shorter migratory circuits.¹³ During the 1950s and early 1960s, these *colonias* (Mexican enclaves) mushroomed. Thousands of families from Texas and northern Mexico came looking for work in the fields.¹⁴ Then at its height, the *bracero* program was “instrumental in channeling the movement of Mexican workers away from Texas and toward California.”¹⁵ The program had the effect, too, of initiating a pattern of immigration characterized by the continual movement of sojourners between Mexico and the United States—what the anthropologist Roger Rouse has termed “transnational migration

Arturo Tirado with Mexican movie star and former Miss Mexico Ana Berta Lepe. Lepe (born 1934 in Jalisco) was one of the many actors who appeared live in performances at the Teatro Azteca. This photograph appeared in December-January 1960 issue of *Novela Cinegrafica*.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION





The great actor Cantinflas (born Mario Moreno, 1911–1993) during a 1946 stop in Fresno. He is enjoying dinner at the Fresno Hotel with Victoria Negrete Basham (on his left) and two unidentified friends.

COURTESY OF JOSEFINA NEGRETE BASHAM

circuits”¹⁶— which tended to encourage an allegiance to traditional culture.

From the very beginning, though, the hub of Mexican life in the Valley was centrally located in the city of Fresno (incorporated in 1885).¹⁷ In 1931, the budding metropolis, the agribusiness capital of the state then as now, “boasted the largest Mexican community in the Valley, with a resident population of six thousand, which grew to ten thousand each harvest.”¹⁸

Long hours of toil in the fields left the Valley’s Mexican-origin residents little time for recreation.¹⁹ They listened to mariachi music on Spanish-language radio broadcasts early in the morning and in the late afternoon. After 1949, when Juan Mercado founded KGST in Fresno, the first Spanish-language radio station in the Valley broadcast music, news, and religious services even

during prime-time hours.²⁰ (Mercado’s popular radio program was soon rivaled by that of Alejandro Medina, on local radio station KXEX.) *La Opinión*, the Spanish-language daily published in Los Angeles, was also a source of information and entertainment. After work, many Mexicans would visit relatives and acquaintances, socialize with friends in local pool halls and cantinas, and, perhaps attend church services—though these were often unavailable in isolated rural settings.

By the weekend, however, the lure of city lights was irresistible. Valley residents poured into Fresno—and, to a lesser extent, into Bakersfield and Sacramento. Patriotic holidays were the occasions for the most extravagant celebrations, with Mexican Independence Day (September 16) and the Cinco de Mayo (May 5) being practically holy

days of obligation. As early as 1925, the city's September 16 celebration drew a throng of fifteen thousand; and the following year, some three thousand spectators attended the September 16 parade.²¹ By the mid-1950s, following major Mexican-American participation in two wars, the Fourth of July was nearly as well attended as the *fiestas patrias*, the Mexican "patriotic feasts." Parades, immensely popular at this time, often featured Mexican-American veterans, none as venerated as local hero Rudy Hernández, a Korean War Medal of Honor recipient (and a quadriplegic). The queen of the celebration, the young lady who sold the most raffle tickets, also rode on a float. And, of course, no procession was complete without the Virgin of Guadalupe, Mexico's patron saint. As was true of the other residents of the Valley, Mexicans were deeply religious.

The circus, too, lured farmworkers to the city from far and wide. Mexican troupes such as the Circo Talamante and the Circo Escalante were smaller than Ringling Brothers or Barnum and Bailey, but no less entertaining.

Roeding Park, northwest of the city center, was always a popular destination, especially for Mexicanos from the nearby western cotton belt. Some families spent the entire day within its friendly confines, a custom that is hardly surprising since in Mexico, working-class life is routinely lived outdoors. Often it was here in the park that residents of outlying farm communities would visit relatives who lived in town; Fresno's Spanish-speaking population consisted largely of ex-farm workers, though the colonia also included a large number of railroad hands (both the Southern Pacific and the Santa Fe rail lines ran through the city).

Saturday nights found the entire family, from toddlers to octogenarians, flocking to the ballroom. Mexican dances were typically held at the Palomar on Kearney Boulevard, the Rainbow on Broadway Street, or the Veterans' Memorial Auditorium on Fresno Street, all venues where the big band sound of local favorites Manuel Contreras

and Andy Guerrero and their orchestras could be enjoyed well into the early hours of the morning. The city was also a regular stop for nationally renowned Latino bands such as those of Beto Villa, Lalo Guerrero, and Pérez Prado, the mambo king. The dances were generally sponsored by mutual-benefit societies, notably the Sociedad Progresista and the Sociedad Morelos.²²

For the Mexicanos of the central valley, however, no trip to Fresno was complete without a visit to Chinatown, in the city's southwestern district then being gradually transformed into a black and Mexican enclave. By the 1950s, the irresistible lure was not so much the Chinese restaurants and the many ethnic bars and dance clubs that dominated the Chinatown business district—as popular as those establishments were—but was instead a modest building located at 838 F Street, one of the pillars of Hispanic life in central California, the Azteca Theater. I turn now to the owner of this popular attraction, one of the most remarkable men to set foot in the Valley.

Arturo Tirado, was born into a show business family in Mexico City in 1912.²³ Natives of Spain, his parents Romualdo and Matilde were entertainers who toured throughout Latin America before the turn of the century. Born in Toledo in 1880, Romualdo Tirado Pozo met and married Matilde Liñán in South America; and after several years spent in Cuba, the young couple immigrated to Mexico in 1909.²⁴ The outbreak of the revolution against Porfirio Díaz, two years later, found the Tirados working as stage actors in the nation's capital, where they struggled to make a name for themselves. Years later, in a 1996 interview with this author, Arturo related his father's fondest memory of this period: the biggest break of his professional career. During a musical performance at the Teatro Principal in Mexico City—with none other than generals Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata in attendance—the featured star got too drunk to go on stage. As luck would have it, there was no other singer in the house, only actors. Prodded by the desperate theater owner, Romualdo was forced to substitute as an

emergency replacement, singing the popular song, "*Los Ojos Tapatíos*" ("Jalisco eyes"). To his amazement, the crowd loved him; he was an overnight success. The performance catapulted him into national prominence, the memorable beginning of a long and illustrious career as a professional singer and actor.²⁵

Despite a series of theatrical triumphs, escalating revolutionary violence soon forced the Spanish couple to emigrate once more. With their three boys, and their entire theatrical troupe, they joined the mass exodus heading north. Like many other artists in Mexico during this turbulent period of its history, the Tirados were drawn to Los Angeles, a city already emerging as the great entertainment capital of the West. After performing several months in Nogales, El Paso, and other border communities, they arrived in Hollywood in late 1919.²⁶ There, during the next two decades, Romualdo Tirado achieved notable success as an actor, singer, producer, director, and theatrical promoter. In fact, according to Nicolás Kanellos, one of the leading authorities on the Hispanic theater in the United States: "He is without a doubt the most important figure in the history of the Hispanic stage of this period. . . . In the City of Angels Tirado became a prime mover in the Hispanic theatrical and cinematic industries as a theater owner and movie producer, and, just as important, he was also one of the catalysts that brought about the writing and staging of local plays and *revistas* [one-act sketches]."²⁷

As Kanellos indicates, Romualdo Tirado specialized in drama. Among the leading stage actors of his time, he also wrote a number of plays, including *De México á Los Angeles*, described by a drama critic as "an immensely popular revista in Los Angeles in 1920 and 1921."²⁸ An impresario as well as an artist, the elder Tirado staged theatrical productions, utilizing both local talent and actors from Mexico, in his own theater, the Teatro Novel (later renamed the Teatro México), on First and Main streets.²⁹ In addition, the Spaniard was one of the first Latino actors to appear on the silver screen, usually as a support-

ing comic character, eventually making a successful transition from silent to talking motion pictures (both English- and Spanish-speaking films).³⁰

Arturo was the eldest of Romualdo's four children. His siblings were Rafael, Miguel, and Matilde. Six years old when the family immigrated to the United States in 1918, Arturo grew up in Los Angeles. The youth attended several schools, including St. Catherine's, a Catholic boarding school—a necessity given his parents' extended tours in the twenties.³¹ As his father continued to pursue his many artistic interests, young Arturo was encouraged to follow in the family tradition. He was given small parts in plays and films. He also served as chauffeur and translator for his father, who worked in films for some of Hollywood's leading movie studios, including RKO and Universal. In 1931, then only nineteen years old, Arturo secured a studio job as an assistant director making Spanish-language films. "I was one of the youngest assistant directors," he later recalled, "not because I was good, but because I was the only one that they could reach out [to] and know that I could speak English and Spanish; as well, I knew all the actors."³²

Meanwhile, Arturo continued to pursue a formal education. Although he never finished high school, he passed the entrance exam and was accepted into the University of Southern California, where he took accounting and other business courses. Leaving college early, in the midst of the Depression, Tirado worked as an accountant for several private firms during the next few years.³³ But show business was in his blood, and he continued to perform in both films and on the stage, occasionally under the name Romualdo Tirado Jr. For a short while—"It must have been around 1937,"³⁴ he later guessed—he even tried his hand as a musician, playing violin in the Xavier Cugat band.³⁵ Deferred from World War II military service because of a broken ear drum, he continued to make his living as an accountant and, more rarely now, a part-time actor.³⁶ With the end of the war in sight and

now in his thirties, Arturo chose to focus on the business end of the entertainment industry rather than become a full-time performer himself. Accompanied by his wife, Elena (Helen) Loaiza, a beautiful Mexican immigrant from Sinaloa whom he married in 1938, and using his father's connections in Hollywood, he set out on a career in motion-picture theater management.³⁷

His initiation into the new field of endeavor came in Bakersfield, in the lower San Joaquin Valley, where he managed a small theater beginning in 1944. The growing family (daughter Virginia was born in 1940) was well accepted into the community, and Arturo was even urged to run for mayor. In 1953, tired of the Valley heat, he moved his family back to the Southland, to San Bernardino, a rapidly growing community in the citrus belt east of Los Angeles, where he managed another small motion-picture theater.³⁸ They didn't stay very long. Tirado was eager to acquire his own establishment; and, given an opportunity to take over a failing investment from his friend Gustavo A. Acosta, who owned a small theater chain, he jumped at the chance to lease the Teatro Azteca in 1956.³⁹

Arturo Tirado's decision to venture into the film business proved to be propitious. By mid-century, a cinematic tradition was well established among Mexicans living in the United States. Like other Americans, they had fallen in love with the silver screen in the 1920s. The silent films of that era permitted immigrants to enjoy the action-packed dramas as thoroughly as their English-speaking neighbors. Lacking a formal education and thus the basic skills required to create a large reading public, Mexican audiences, both in the Old Country and in the United States, found the motion picture, with its rich visual imagery, to be irresistible.⁴⁰ By the mid-1930s, the cinema—*el cho*, *los monos*, *las películas*, and *las vistas* were only some of the many terms Spanish speakers employed when referring to the medium—represented their single most popular form of entertainment.⁴¹ Among the most well-known Hollywood screen stars of the interwar period were Ramón Novarro and Dolores del Río, Mexican



Dolores del Río and Pedro Armendariz were two legendary stars whose movies were favorites at the Teatro Azteca. La Malquerida (the "unloved") was released in 1949 and is a classic of Mexican cinema.

COURTESY OF THE AGRASANCHEZ FILM ARCHIVE,
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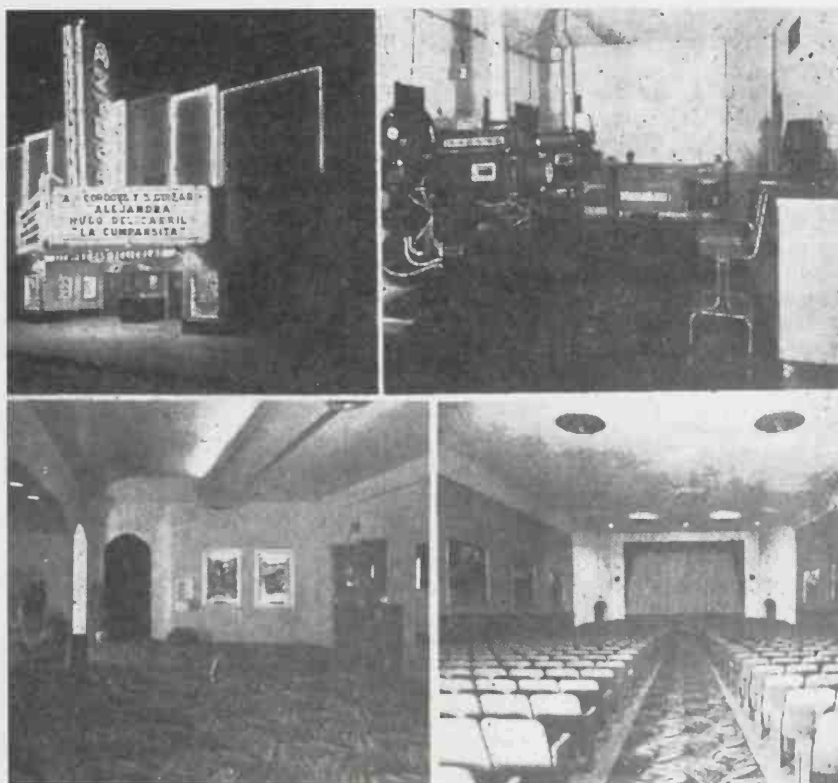
The Teatro Azteca lights the night sky and promises magic acts, movies, and live performances to ease the day's cares.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

actors who proved to be a great draw among their compatriots of the Southwest.⁴²

Concurrently, a thriving motion-picture industry arose in Mexico itself. After an early period of artistic and financial stagnation during the Depression, the Mexican film industry started to make giant strides in the mid-1930s, the beginning of Mexico's Golden Age of cinema, an era that would continue for the next two decades.⁴³ This development was aided by the even more serious decline of the industry in Hollywood during the economic collapse of the Depression, which gave Mexican filmmakers a chance to exploit markets throughout Latin America; and, during the Second World War, by the massive financial aid provided Mexico by the United States, its wartime ally.⁴⁴ *Doña Bárbara* (1943), *María Candelaria* (1943), *La perla* (1945), *Río Escondido* (1947), *Salón México* (1948), and *El rebozo de Soledad* (1952) are only some of the many masterpieces emerging from the Mexican Republic during this innovative period. While these films often played in the very same theaters frequented by English-speaking audiences, *Americanos*—a term used by Mexican-origin people to designate members of the non-Hispanic population—remained almost completely ignorant of the genre. (The Mexican film remains “one of the least known and most underappreciated of all national cinemas,” according to film historian Charles Ramírez Berg.)⁴⁵ By the 1950s, with substantial support by the federal government, the Mexican movie industry was able to control every aspect of the flourishing business: production, distribution, and exhibition.

Films made during the Golden Age were highly nationalistic, which helps to explain their enormous appeal to Mexican citizens then living in the United States, a population that scholars have labeled *México de fuera* (immigrant Mexico). Impoverished and unskilled, these immigrants found life in the United States exceedingly difficult. Anti-Mexican sentiment, moreover, was rampant both during the Depression and the war that ensued.⁴⁶ The films that emerged from



The fan magazine Novela Cinegrafica featured a spread on the Teatro Azteca, including views of its façade, office, and seating.

AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Mexico after the mid-1930s, therefore, as the historian Alex M. Saragoza has amply demonstrated, filled the deep psychic needs of a beleaguered immigrant population.⁴⁷ Mexican immigrants continued to identify with their homeland far longer than other immigrants in the United States. There are a multitude of reasons for this cultural persistence. One key factor was the rise of transnational communities. More important still was the influence of the cinema and other forms of mass media originating in the homeland.⁴⁸

As Mexican films made their way across the border, Spanish-language movie houses were estab-

lished throughout the Southwest and in the few places outside the region, notably Chicago, with populations large enough to support them.⁴⁹ This trend was most apparent in southern California. From World War I to the early 1930s, Los Angeles, now rapidly replacing San Antonio as the largest Hispanic market in the country, was able to sustain a score of ethnic theater houses. Mostly owned by non-Latinos, there were five major venues.⁵⁰ These included the Teatro Hidalgo, which opened in 1911, making it the first of the large houses, and the aforementioned Teatro

Novel. Starting as venues for stage plays, they were gradually transformed into motion-picture theaters. The first movie theater in the country to show Spanish-language movies exclusively was the Teatro California, located near the corner of Eighth and Main streets in Los Angeles. The theater owners initiated the new policy on August 28, 1930.⁵¹ By the 1940s and 1950s, when the number of cinemas multiplied significantly, the largest chain belonged to Hawaiian-born businessman Francisco (Frank) Fouce, Sr., who owned the Roosevelt, the Liberty, the Mason, and, the flagship of his growing empire, the Maya.⁵² After the war, the ambitious impresario also leased one of the great movie palaces in the downtown area, the Million Dollar Theater, which then became “a premiere latino venue” in the City of Angels.⁵³ (Built by showman Sid Grauman, the famous theater on 307 South Broadway had its grand opening in 1918.)⁵⁴

Movie houses catering mainly to Anglo audiences also ran Spanish-language films when there was sufficient demand, but these films were shown on a part-time basis, making them inconvenient to Latino audiences. Moreover, Anglo theaters were often racially segregated into the 1960s, which alienated Mexicanos, as well as other people of color.⁵⁵ (César Chávez later recalled getting tossed out of a movie house in Delano as a youth in about 1940 for violating the segregationist policy.)⁵⁶

However, it was the live appearance of the performers themselves, continuing a vaudeville tradition in the Old Country, that most attracted immigrant audiences to Mexican movie houses. In fact, most early movie houses had begun as venues for dramatic groups, a history that stretched back at least to the mid-nineteenth century.⁵⁷ In large cities such as Chicago, San Antonio, Tucson, El Paso, and Los Angeles, touring theater troupes, and later resident companies, had performed both Mexican and Spanish plays. Arturo Tirado’s parents, as we have seen, were part of this established tradition. (Smaller towns were often visited

by *carpas*, modest theatrical groups that performed in tents.)⁵⁸

Interestingly, this popular stage tradition flourished throughout the West, among all kinds of audiences, Latino and non-Latino, since at least the time of the California gold rush—one of the greatest performers was Lola Montez, who incidentally was actually an Irish actress.⁵⁹ However, among Anglo Americans traveling artists performing in modest venues were largely extinct by the 1940s, superseded by the radio and the Hollywood film, as well as by the legitimate theater.

The tradition of live “serious” theater continued among Mexicans well into the twentieth century. “Indeed,” writes music historian John Koegel, “the period between the 1910s and 1940s saw the highpoint of Spanish-language theatrical activity in Los Angeles, with musical and theatrical performances offered regularly to the growing Hispanic population.”⁶⁰ Gradually, however, as we have seen, these theatrical performances were phased out in movie houses catering to Mexican audiences, but other forms of live entertainment continued to supplement motion pictures. In addition to the previously mentioned revistas, these included comedy acts, burlesques, and *zarzuelas* (Spanish musical comedies). Professional musicians, groups and individual performers, were frequently featured. Many film theaters also sponsored amateur competitions. Still, the most interesting aspect of the early Mexican cinematic tradition was the personal appearance at local movie houses of some of the biggest names in the film industry: singers, comedians, and actors. Undoubtedly the great disparity in salaries between the two neighboring countries made it profitable for major Mexican stars to tour in the United States, even in modest venues, a tradition that was maintained long after it had faded among Anglo-American audiences.

Arturo Tirado recalled in our 1996 interview that he had been very fortunate to open the Aztec Theater when and where he had, given Fresno’s central importance in the 1950s to the huge Mexican working-class population in the San

Joaquin Valley. (And he was not alone. The growing Mexican presence spawned the growth of a large Hispanic middle class in the city catering to its needs.) At the end of the evening, once the day's receipts were tabulated, there were times when the hardworking entrepreneur was able to put a thousand dollars in his pocket, much to his wife's amazement and delight!⁶¹ While scholars today might find these large sums highly improbable given the modest means of the largely nomadic working-class population at that time, contemporary observers had no doubt that local impresarios made fabulous profits.

In my hometown, Mendota, for example, an impoverished Westside community much smaller than Fresno with a population at mid-century of two thousand to four thousand inhabitants, depending on the season, the finest residence did not belong to a labor contractor or even a grower (local land barons like Russell Giffen lived either in the countryside or in Fresno, thirty-five miles away). This fairy-tale brick structure, a cross between an Italian villa and a small German castle, belonged to the owner of the local theater, Tony Bó, a Spanish immigrant. This fact speaks volumes for the popularity of the silver screen among *la chicanada* (the Mexican masses).

Nor was the attraction of a Mexican movie theater confined exclusively to Mexicanos. Fresno-born Japanese-American poet, Lawson Fusao Inada (1938–), testifies to this cross-cultural appeal in one of his poems:

When Teatro Azteca opened up
 Right there on "F" Street
 In the heart of "Chinatown,"
 All us kids—"Hispanic"
 And otherwise—got excited—
 Because with a few coins
 You could go in there
 With the Wongs and the Washingtons
 To enjoy some serious cinema.
 An "alternative," so to speak,
 To what was already going on

In the West Side's, count em,
 Movie houses: Cal, Ryan's, Lyceum . . .

And, of course, since we were
 All geographically versed
 In advanced or at least elementary Spanish,

"Hoy Cantinflas" on the marquee
 meant just what it said: Laughs!⁶²

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Most local movie houses catering to Mexicanos featured both English-language and Spanish-language films. The Teatro Azteca was an exception: All the movies were in Spanish. These would arrive from Mexico City via Los Angeles, which by the 1930s was the largest distribution center for Spanish-language films throughout the United States.⁶³ Tirado's booking agent in Los Angeles was the man who leased him the theater, his friend Gustavo Acosta, whose office was on Vermont Avenue.⁶⁴

On November 14, 1961, Arturo Tirado convened a meeting in San Francisco that resulted in the creation of the Spanish Pictures Exhibitors Association (SPEA).⁶⁵ This was a state-wide—later a national—organization to promote the interests of the owners of theaters showing Spanish-language films, especially vis-à-vis the movie distributors.⁶⁶ Its primary founder, Tirado was also appropriately elected the association's first president. At its height, the SPEA represented two hundred to three hundred theaters throughout the United States (forty or fifty in California alone), from as far away as Chicago, Corpus Christi, and Miami, Florida.⁶⁷ On one occasion, threatening a boycott, Tirado, as a SPEA representative, got government distributors in Mexico City, who wanted to charge U.S. theater owners a 50 or 60 percent commission, to agree to a much more reasonable fee: 30 percent for old films, 40 percent for new but second-rate ones, and 50 percent for exceptionally fine ones. It was this tough negotiating stance, he recalled, that had won him the association's presidency in the first place.⁶⁸



Germán Valdés (1915–1973), known as Tin-Tan, was a Mexican actor, singer, and comedian. He often wore pachuco dress and used Mexican American pachuco slang, popularizing it in Mexico. *El Rey del Barrio* (1950), in which Valdés plays a hapless gangster, was one of his best-loved films.

COURTESY OF THE AGRASÁNCHEZ FILM ARCHIVE,
HARLINGEN, TEXAS

How did the Mexican stars, actors and other performers, connect with theaters in the United States? How were they recruited for personal appearances? For the most part, they were contracted in Mexico by agents who would broker the deal, arrange the tours, and often accompany and introduce the stars. While it is unclear whether he acted at the time on behalf of an association or as a private contractor, clearly Arturo Tirado was one of the most influential of these intermediaries. It was largely in this capacity, as well as his early years in Hollywood, that he came to know, personally and professionally, virtually every major artist in Mexico from the 1930s to the 1970s. There were only a handful of box-office sensations, notably Jorge Negrete and Dolores del Río, whom the indefatigable promoter failed to entice to his theaters. In our 1996 interview, the eighty-three-year-old Tirado, still amazingly lucid in his recollections, took great delight in sharing some personal impressions of his most memorable clients.⁶⁹

If Dolores del Río was drop-dead gorgeous, María Félix (1914–2002), largely unknown by North American audiences, was even more so; she was generally considered “the most beautiful face in the history of Mexican cinema.”⁷⁰ However, she was almost as well known for her libertarian lifestyle as she was for her legendary good looks.⁷¹ Fiery and temperamental, she seemed to revel in controversy. A chronicle of her sexual affairs, Diego Rivera among them, would fill a volume.⁷² On one occasion, the awe-struck promoter took her on a tour that included San Jose, where he had to rent a large ballroom to hold the overflow crowd of some four thousand or five thousand. Fans were practically spilling onto the stage. Worried, Tirado offered the pampered actress a word of caution: “María,” as he called her, was instructed not to get too close to the edge of the stage, for some rowdy might grab “her leg or something.” Nonplussed, the elegant starlet replied, as the straight-laced master-of-ceremonies recalled with some amusement, “Mire Tirado, tantos años de chingar y no saber mover el abanico!”

(A rough translation: "Look here, Tirado, after years of screwing, you'd think I'd have sense enough to move the bod!")

A true diva, María Félix had a reputation for being difficult, and the first time he booked her, Mr. Tirado was warned by his friends to treat the megastar with kid gloves. Apprehensive, he realized that he needed a strategy to keep her in line. Taking the initiative, he went to her before she was to go on stage, and gently let her know that if she performed as the professional that she truly was, afterwards he would throw a little party in her honor. Moreover, he added, he would try to get a studio job in Hollywood for her only son, and constant companion, Enrique, whom she adored. Now that impressed her. That evening she gave a flawless performance.

Film historians tell us that Enrique was María's son by the first of her four husbands, Enrique Álvarez.⁷³ Mr. Tirado joked that actually the diva's son was a product of one of her numerous affairs. Certainly the "kid" did not belong to Agustín Lara, her second husband (the legendary Jorge Negrete was husband number three), he hastened to add; Lara was too old for children.⁷⁴

If not the most prolific, Agustín Lara (1897–1970) is perhaps Mexico's most beloved singer-composer, and was a matinee idol in his own right (many of Mexico's best singers appeared in movies: Pedro Vargas, Miguel Aceves Mejía, José Alfredo Jiménez, and others). He was a notorious skirt-chaser, though. On one occasion the renowned entertainer came to the United States for a tour; and he, Mr. Tirado, was asked to make the arrangements. A gentle man like the promoter himself, Lara was well known for his Old World charm. The two men got along famously. They shared many things in common, notably their deep admiration of Spain and its people. During the tour, however, with Tirado at the wheel, his wife was asked by the suave actor-composer, then in his sixties, to accompany him in the back seat of the car. The flattered Mrs. Tirado was only too glad to keep their celebrated guest company. So what does the Living Legend

do? "He tried to hit on my wife," a bemused Tirado recalled.⁷⁵ Still, he concluded, Lara was always a huge crowd favorite; so much so that only very large theaters, those with more than one thousand seats, could be booked for his personal appearances.

Asked to name his least favorite entertainer among those with whom he had worked, the promoter demurred, insisting that they were all affable ("very nice people, all of them"). Who was his favorite? There were so many—Pedro Armendáriz, Antonio Aguilar. . . . Pressed on the point, however, he reluctantly conceded that perhaps Pedro Infante (1917–1957) was "the nicest and most accessible—maybe number one." Their first meeting was memorable (the specific date escaped him, but it must have been at the beginning of 1952).⁷⁶ One day, Frank Fouce, Jr., who had just taken over management of the Million Dollar Theater from his father, called Tirado to Los Angeles to help resolve a problem. Once there, he was informed that Pedro Infante, a young artist from Mexico, had been contracted by the Fouce Entertainment Company to sing and play his guitar at the theater, but he had confused the date and had arrived a week ahead of schedule. The promoter was in a quandary. What to do with the entertainer? Tirado agreed to work something out. He crossed the street to the hotel where the "youth" was staying and found him half asleep in the lobby. Are you Pedro Infante? he inquired. Tirado recalled that the startled young man surprised him when he stood up straight and replied, "*A servir a Vd. y a Dios*" ("To serve you and God"), an archaic form of address rarely used even in Spain, where it originated. Would the performer like to earn one hundred dollars a day? "*A quién hay que matar?*" ("Who do I have to kill?"), the incredulous youth replied even before Tirado finished the question. A deal was struck on the spot. Soon the happy-go-lucky musician was off on a week's tour of a number of small towns, including San Bernardino, Bakersfield, and Fresno. He earned many acco-



Jorge Negrete (1911–1953), star of *¡Ay Jalisco, no te rajes!* (1941), was one of Arturo Tirado's favorite performers. The movie, which appeared in English-speaking theaters as *Jalisco, Don't Backslide*, features Negrete as a desperado during the Mexican Revolution.

COURTESY OF THE AGRASÁNCHEZ FILM ARCHIVE.
HARLINGEN, TEXAS

lades on that trip, and they were well deserved. Pedro Infante, who became a good friend and drinking companion, never really changed, Tirado mused; he always retained a child-like innocence throughout his career as a superstar.⁷⁷

Although a much nicer person than María Félix, Pedro Infante was just as much of a risk-taker. He loved to live on the edge. On one clamorous occasion, the touring performer, an ex-boxer, got into a fist fight with some unruly “fans” who wondered if he was as tough as the macho characters he portrayed on the screen.⁷⁸ When his friend Jorge Negrete, his leading rival as the premier male matinee idol in Mexico, died of hepatitis in Los Angeles in December 1953, on the eve of a performance at the Million Dollar Theater,⁷⁹ Infante famously showed up at the funeral driving his Harley Davidson motorcycle.⁸⁰ (The two men were undoubtedly the greatest protagonists of the most original genre to emerge from the Mexican motion-picture industry, *la comedia ranchera*, the ranch-based comedy.)⁸¹ A dare-devil pilot, the fearless singer-actor crashed single-engine planes on three separate occasions, with the last accident proving fatal.⁸²

The death of Pedro Infante in 1957, at the age of forty, is often considered the end of the Golden Age of Mexican cinema. Thereafter, suffering from a multitude of problems, including the premature demise of several of its key protagonists, excessive government regulation, a weak national economy, and increasing competition from Hollywood and other forms of popular entertainment, notably television, the industry went rapidly downhill by the late 1960s.⁸³ The large audiences, both in Mexico and the United States, soon dwindled. Recognizing that the industry's golden years were clearly and irretrievably over, the sixty-eight-year-old Tirado permitted his lease on the Teatro Azteca to run out in 1980.⁸⁴

Don Arturo could well have retired. A shrewd businessman, he had made wise investments in real estate. Moreover, in 1973, according to the historian Alex Saragoza, “Arturo Tirado was instrumental in the formation of Pacific Federal Savings

and Loan, the first financial institution in the Fresno area founded by Hispanics."⁸⁵ The calculated gamble was another notable success. The great influx of Mexicans into the Valley, particularly after World War II, had provided him, and many other Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs in the larger towns and cities, a multitude of business opportunities. However, still young at heart, and a man of great energy, the ex-promoter was not about to leave the public limelight. Instead, he chose to concentrate on his numerous philanthropic activities.

Even as a businessman, Arturo Tirado had made service-oriented activities one of his highest priorities. Beginning during the heyday of the civil rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s, a small coterie of the city's most progressive Latino merchants and lawyers—among them, Jorge (George) Acuña, Michael Cárdenas, Gilbert López, Armando Rodríguez, Phillip Sánchez, and Al Villa—had been assiduous in expanding and protecting the political and cultural rights of Fresno's Spanish-speaking minorities.⁸⁶ Tirado was one of the most influential of these civic-minded leaders, all of them members of the Latin American Businessmen's Club. Countless hours were spent on community affairs. He told an interviewer in 1974, for example, that he belonged to about fourteen boards, clubs, and associations, "and I'm active in all of them."⁸⁷ Burdened by a multitude of problems, especially those related to immigration, social security, and taxes, farm workers came from all over the Valley seeking Don Arturo's advice. This was freely dispensed. Armed with forms and brochures, they were soon sent off in search of the appropriate bureaucrat, lawyer, or politician. In time, the Teatro Azteca became more of a community center and clearing house than an entertainment venue, earning its owner, an indefatigable advocate of popular causes, the unofficial title, "mayor of west Fresno."⁸⁸

Moreover, for many years the popular Tirado had a weekly radio program on Fresno's KXEX where he counseled the Valley's Mexican community



Huracán Ramírez (1953) was one of the first Mexican wrestling films and initiated the very popular and highly successful lucha libre genre.

COURTESY OF THE AGRASÁNCHEZ FILM ARCHIVE,
HARTGEN, TEXAS

on a multitude of issues, particularly immigration. He even authored a how-to manual on gaining legal entry into the country (in Spanish),⁸⁹ and was sufficiently versed on the subject that Governor Ronald Reagan, pondering a run for the presidency, proposed that the Fresno accompany him to Washington as his immigration secretary (an offer Tirado politely declined).⁹⁰ Other influential people sought his aid as well.

Arturo Tirado recalled how on one occasion, apparently about 1965, a young priest showed up on his doorstep, introduced himself as the head of Catholic charities in the Fresno area, and asked the theater owner for help. Rather casual in his observance of Catholicism, Tirado was nevertheless ready to do his part. But he was puzzled. Did the priest want a monetary contribution? Or, since Tirado had his radio program, perhaps the clergyman preferred a public announcement soliciting funds? No, instead the priest asked if the Teatro Azteca might be used as a platform to launch a food drive for the needy. The civic-minded businessman was only too glad to help. Following the bingo games he routinely sponsored, Tirado took the stage and appealed to his audiences for food donations, in exchange for a free theater pass. The next day, he recalled, farm workers began to arrive with their donations from all over the Valley—Tulare, Madera, Merced, Delano, Mendota. When the *padrecito* ("little father") returned a couple of days later with a small pickup truck, expecting to collect three or four boxes, his beaming host took him into the theater. It was filled with boxes and bags of food from the floor to the rafters! The young priest, Father Roger Mahony—now Cardinal Mahony of Los Angeles—could barely believe his eyes. Overwhelmed, the grateful clergyman was forced to seek out his friends among the ranch owners for help with transportation. It took "at least fifteen semi's, those enormous trucks," a proud Tirado recalled, to haul away the bonanza.⁹¹

A few months later, his friends called on Don Arturo for another favor. There was a young

labor organizer in Delano who was in dire need. His name was César Chávez. Could Tirado help?⁹² Without a moment's hesitation, Tirado drove down to Delano, where he found Chávez living in a hovel, "actually it was a garage." He was in bed, his injured leg in traction. There was no money for food or rent. "*Me tocó el corazón*" ("He touched my heart"), Tirado recalls.⁹³ He wrote him a check on the spot.

Nineteen-sixty-six was the year of Chávez's famous march from Delano to Sacramento. In Tulare, Chávez and the marchers were attacked with dogs by the city police. As the protesting workers approached Fresno, Tirado feared more violence. Anticipating problems, he went to the town mayor, a friend, and asked him to intervene. What could he do? Mayor Floyd Hyde asked. The chief of police, Henry Morton, another personal friend, Tirado counseled, should go out and escort the marchers into town. "Done," was the mayor's response. The march through California's agribusiness capital went without a hitch. The next day the *Fresno Bee* reported that the city had received Chávez "with open arms," a proud Tirado recalled.⁹⁴

Even in his eighties, then in retirement in Santa Barbara, a city so reminiscent of the Spain he dearly loved, the widely respected ex-businessman continued to perform works of charity in his community, regularly helping Mexican immigrants fill out immigration and tax forms. "Be a doer, and help your people," he once said, "Then automatically, someplace in your life, somebody will remember you and say, 'Well, even if some people didn't like him, I did like him.'"⁹⁵ Arturo Tirado died on January 15, 1998, after a lifetime of public service.⁹⁶ Laid to rest in Lafayette, California, he is survived by his wife Elena and daughter Virginia.⁹⁷

The life of Arturo Tirado both reflected and influenced the Mexican culture that emerged in central California in the twentieth century. Mexican immigration into the Valley after the 1920s opened up myriad opportunities for the rise of a multitude of Mexican-owned and -operated busi-

nesses catering to an expanding Latino market. Fresno, in the geographical center of the Great Valley, was particularly affected by the demographic and economic changes. These trends soon accelerated. As the historian Mario T. García and other Chicano scholars have shown, World War II greatly elevated the status of large segments of the Spanish-speaking community across the country, creating a Mexican-American middle class. The Valley was no exception. There, too, the war gave rise to a middle class of sufficient size and affluence to gain the respect of the Anglo establishment. Arturo Tirado was very much a part of this broad socioeconomic trend.

As in other parts of the Southwest, it was this fledgling middle class, consisting largely of the proprietors of small businesses, which came to champion the beleaguered ethnic community in its dealings with the outside world. It was these entrepreneurs who took it upon themselves to provide for the spiritual and material welfare of the working masses. Here, too, the civic-minded Fresnan was a representative figure.

However, Don Arturo exerted an influence on the Spanish-speaking community that went well beyond charitable works. His role as a preserver of Mexican culture, in particular, should not be underestimated. The Hollywood cinema, as many Latino and non-Latino film critics have argued, has historically misrepresented Mexicans on the silver screen.⁹⁸ The very first depictions focused on the “greaser,” the lawless and profligate half-breed. Subsequent portrayals—the Latin lover, the docile peon, the gay caballero, the Mexican spitfire—were only slightly less derogatory. These simplistic images, of course, were based on racist perceptions, though only in part; stereotypes, after all, are the stock in trade of the movie industry. On the other hand, with all of its flaws, including a highly romanticized depiction of traditional society, the Mexican film industry, even during the Golden Age, presented a much more positive portrayal of the Old Country to the immigrant community north of the Rio Grande. Exploited and abused, working-class immigrants

and their children looked to their homeland for a source of inspiration, and they found it in the films of Pedro Armendáriz, María Félix, and Cantinflas. Ultimately, it is fair to conclude, Arturo Tirado and other compatriots involved in producing, distributing, and exhibiting these motion pictures provided *México de afuera* not only entertainment, a welcome escape from a life of unrelenting toil, but something considerably more important—a sense of pride and self-worth.

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PERCY H. STEELE, JR., AND THE URBAN LEAGUE BY ALBERT S. BROUSSARD, PP 8-23

¹ E. J. Gentry to James Weldon Johnson, February 27, 1924, San Diego Branch Files, NAACP Papers, The West, microfilm, reel 2; San Diego *Independent*, August 31, 1927; September 2, 1927; September 3, 1927; San Diego *Comet*, February 28, 1949; "Application for Charter of San Diego, California Branch, December 10, 1918, Papers of the NAACP, 1913-1939, The West, reel 2, San Diego Branch Files, NAACP papers.

² On the new racial militancy during World War II, consult Richard M. Dalfiume, "The 'Forgotten Years' of the Negro Revolution," *Journal of American History* 55 (June 1968): 90-106; Harvard Sitkoff, "Racial Militancy and Interracial Violence in World War II," *Journal of American History* 58 (December 1971): 661-681; Richard M. Dalfiume, *Fighting in Two Fronts: Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces, 1939-1953* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1969).

³ Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 59, 62; The impact of World War II on San Diego and many West Coast cities was documented in a series of congressional hearings in 1943. See "Report on the San Diego Area by the Subcommittee of the Naval Affairs Committee Appointed to Investigate Congestion in Critical War Production Areas," May 3, 1943, 78th Congress, 1st Session, Washington, D.C.

⁴ Nash, *The American West Transformed*, 89.

⁵ See Albert S. Broussard, *Black San Francisco*, chapter 8; Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528-1990* (New York, Norton, 1998): p. 254.

⁶ Leonard V. Griffith to Dr. J. J. Kimbrough, July 7, 1945, National Urban League Papers, Series I, Administration Department, Affiliates files, box 126, Library of Congress, hereafter cited as NUL papers; Broussard, *Black San Francisco*, pp. 189-192.

⁷ James Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985). The best study of segregation in the Jim Crow South remains Leon Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Knopf, 1998).

⁸ Interview with J. J. Kimbrough, October 11, 1990, conducted by Robert G. Wright, San Diego Historical Society.

⁹ One of the best examples of Mississippi's system of racial violence and segregation remains Richard Wright, *Black Boy: A Record of Childhood and Youth* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945); Neil R. McMillan, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989). On lynching, consult Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980).

¹⁰ San Diego Union Tribune, n.d., [1980s], copy in San Diego Historical Society Special Collections.

¹¹ San Diego Union Tribune, August 4, 1996. Unfortunately, there is no record of the "sit-in" that Kimbrough, as president of the NAACP, organized in the branch files of the San Diego NAACP. Nor could I locate any additional evidence of this episode in the local press.

¹² Kimbrough to Mayor John Butler, July 30, 1953, box 126, NUL papers.

¹³ Memo, W. Miller Barbour to Nelson C. Jackson, July 20, 1954, box 126, NUL papers.

¹⁴ Interview with Percy H. Steele, Jr., July 19, 1969, conducted by Robert Martin, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, hereafter cited as Steele interview. On the importance of black workers in the automotive industry, see August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, *Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

¹⁵ Steele interview, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center; On Thurman's life and influence, see Howard Thurman, *With Head and Heart: The Autobiography of Howard Thurman* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1979).

¹⁶ Steele Interview, pp. 3-4; Walter Ware, *Black Business in the New South: A Social History of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973). A good description of life in early twentieth century Durham, North Carolina is provided by Robert F. Durden in *The Dukes of Durham* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1975); E. Franklin Frazier, "Durham: Capital of the Black Middle Class," in Alain Locke, ed., *The New Negro* (1925. Reprinted New York: Atheneum, 1977).

¹⁷ San Diego Evening Tribune, May 17, 1958; James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: HarperCollins, 1985).

¹⁸ Waldemar Hagan to Lester Granger, August 13, 1953, box 126, NUL papers; Memo, Charles E. Eason to Lester Granger, August 31, 1953, box 126, NUL papers.

¹⁹ Memo, Eason to Granger, August 31, 1953, box 126, NUL papers.

²⁰ Percy H. Steele to Rev. Russell B. Barbour, February 18, 1954, box 126, NUL papers; Oakland Tribune, March 28, 2002.

²¹ "1954 program Assessment of the San Diego Urban League," December 9, 1954, box 126, NUL papers.

²² Steele to Granger, July 21, 1954, box 126, NUL papers.

²³ Steele to Granger, July 21, 1954, box 126; Miller Barbour to Nelson C. Jackson, July 20, 1954, box 126, NUL papers.

²⁴ Memorandum, Walter White to Miss Ella Baker and Miss Lucille Black, May 22, 1946, San Diego Branch Files, Series 2, carton 19, NAACP Papers.

²⁵ Reverend John J. Lewis to Walter White, December 27, 1947, San Diego Branch Files, Series 2, carton 19, NAACP Papers.

²⁶ Franklin H. Williams to Dear Friends [of San Diego], April 1, 1954, San Diego Branch Files, Series 2, carton 19, NAACP Papers; Lester P. Bailey to Lucille Black, March 23, 1954; Nadine Smith to Gloster Current, February 26, 1954, San Diego Branch Files, Series 2, carton 19, NAACP Papers.

²⁷ Donald S. Gardner to Lester Granger, July 23, 1953, box 126, NUL papers.

²⁸ Steele to Granger, April 1, 1954, box 126, NUL papers.

²⁹ Steele to Granger, December 6, 1955, box 126, NUL papers; Steele to Board of Directors, May 13, 1954; "Executive Director's Report," April 7-May 7, 1954, box 126, NUL papers.

³⁰ Steele to Granger, March 16, 1955 and December 6, 1955, box 126, NUL papers.

³¹ Steele to Granger, December 6, 1955, box 126, NUL papers; Dorothy Dandridge's tragic life and career is examined in Donald Bogle, *Dorothy Dandridge: A Biography* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996); On Lester Granger's role in the National Urban League, consult Nancy J. Weiss, *The National Urban*

League: 1910-1940 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974).

Granger to Steele, December 13, 1955, box 26, NUL papers.

Steele to Granger, May 3, 1956, box 126, IUL papers.

¹"Minutes of Executive Committee Adopt-Child," March 23, 1955, Community Services Department, NUL papers; Nelson Jackson to Vinnie von Hoogenstyn, April 5, 1957, Community Services Department, NUL papers; "Information on Adopt-a-Child," March 1, 1956, NUL papers, Library of Congress.

Steele to Moss, February 27, 1958, box 127, IUL papers.

²Steele to Nelson Jackson, July 31, 1959 and Steele to Mrs. Jackson Chance, June 4, 1959, box 127, NUL papers.

³Jackson to Granger, September 4, 1958, box 127, NUL papers.

⁴Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier*, pp. 254, 286-87.

⁵"Program, First Annual Meeting and Dinner," San Diego Urban League, February 24, 1955, box 126, NUL papers; Steele to Moss, February 27, 1958, box 127, NUL papers.

⁶Matthew Whitaker, *Race Work: The Rise of Civil Rights in the Urban West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), p. 16; Kevin Allen Leonard, "Brothers Under the Skin?": African Americans, Mexican Americans, and World War II in California," in Roger W. Lotchin, ed., *The Way We Really Were: The Golden State in the Second World War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), pp. 187-214.

⁷"Newsletter," San Diego Urban League, n.d. [1959], box 127, NUL papers; For a more recent example of a youth organization in East Los Angeles, consult John Chavez, *Eastside Landmark: A History of the East Los Angeles Community Union, 1968-1993* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

⁸Waldemar Hagan to George A. Scott, July 1, 1958, box 127, NUL papers.

⁹"Workshop Committee, 1959," San Diego Urban League, box 127, NUL papers.

¹⁰"Workshop Committee, 1959," box 127, NUL papers.

¹¹"Program, First Annual Workshop on Cultural Factors," October 29-30, 1959, box

127, NUL papers; Memorandum, Nelson C. Jackson to Lester B. Granger, November 12, 1959, box 127, NUL papers.

¹²"Newsletter," San Diego Urban League Branch, Summer 1959, box 127, NUL papers.

¹³Memorandum, Jackson to Granger, November 12, 1959, box 127, NUL papers.

¹⁴Broussard, *Black San Francisco*, pp. 184, 192.

¹⁵Seaton W. Manning, "Cultural Factors and Value Systems Which May Effect the Negro Client's Approach to and Use of Agency Services," box 127, NUL papers.

¹⁶Steele to Jackson, November 5, 1959, box 127; Jackson to Steele, November 12, 1959, box 127; Jackson to Lester Granger, November 12, 1959, box 127, NUL papers.

¹⁷Jackson to Granger, November 12, 1959, box 127, NUL papers.

¹⁸Speech by Admiral D.D. Nelson, November 10, 1959, box 127; Memorandum, Steele to Urban League colleagues, December 2, 1959, box 127, NUL papers.

¹⁹A.G. Gross to Steele, August 30, 1960, Part II, Community Services Department, Special file, box 19, NUL papers.

²⁰Interview with Percy H. Steele, p. 24, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center; Quintard Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870 through the Civil Rights Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), p. 186.

²¹On discrimination in West Coast labor unions, see Broussard, *Black San Francisco*, pp. 158-65; Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community*, pp. 163-77. Ethan Rarick reconstructs Edmund Brown's political career in *California Rising: The Life and Times of Pat Brown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); For a recent study on the quest of Mexican workers to gain respect and economic parity in one western industry, consult Matt Garcia, *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

²²Steele to Jackson, March 17, 1962, Part II, Administration Department, Affiliates Files, box 78, NUL papers.

²³Steele to Jackson, March 17, 1962, box 78, NUL papers.

²⁴Steele to Whitney Young, June 26, 1962, box 78, NUL papers.

²⁵Young to Steele, July 13, 1962, box 78, NUL papers. On Young's career as executive director of the National Urban League, see Dennis C. Dickerson, *Militant Mediator: Whitney M. Young, Jr.* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1998); Nancy J. Weiss, *Whitney M. Young, Jr., and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

²⁶Interview with Percy Steele, pp. 28-29; Moorland-Spingarn Research Center; San Diego Union, January 28, 1960; Steele to Alexander J. Allen, July 21, 1960; "Newsletter," San Diego Urban League, Summer 1959 and Winter 1960.

²⁷Interview with Percy Steele, p. 38, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center; Obituary of Percy Steele, Jr., in *Oakland Tribune*, March 28, 2002.

²⁸On the new African American leadership that emerged in three western cities following World War II, see Broussard, *Black San Francisco*, pp. 180-192; Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community*, pp. 187-88; and Whitaker, *Race Work: The Rise of Civil Rights in the Urban West*, pp. 103-146. The best study of the 1965 Watts riot is Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960's* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995).

GOVERNOR REAGAN: REAPPRAISAL BY JACKSON, K. PUTNAM, PP 24-47

¹The 2003 flap over the suppression of the CBS telecast "The Reagans" serves as an instance of this right-wing guardianship of Reagan's legacy: *Los Angeles Times*, October 3, 2003; p. B2; 4, p. A1; 5, pp. C1 and B14; 6, p. B14. Another was a movement to replace FDR's likeness on the dime with Reagan's, see Robert Scheer, "GOP Has Got to Get Off the Dime," *Ibid.*, Dec. 9, 2003, p. B13. Reagan's death on June 5, 2004, seems to have strengthened this process of apotheosis considerably.

²Ronald Reagan, *An American Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), pp. 155-191. This amounts to 36 out of some 716 pages.

³For an extended discussion of this governing system, see my "The Pattern of Modern California Politics," *Pacific Historical Review* 61 (February 1992): 23-52.

NOTES

⁴Robert Scheer, "Arrogant Arnold or Capable Cruz?" *Los Angeles Times*, May 26, 2003, p. B13. As the title implies, this piece was a slam against Arnold Schwarzenegger and in favor of Cruz Bustamante in the 2003 recall election. It was probably the first and only time that Scheer wrote a favorable word about Reagan, but he was content to make him look good on this occasion, as rhetorical contrast to Schwarzenegger, a more immediate threat to liberal politics.

⁵Lou Cannon, "Legislature May Read From New Governor's Script," *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 12, 2003, p. M3. See also Cannon's *Governor Reagan: His Rise to Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2003), chapter 14. This appeared after I had completed my research on a book on Jesse Unruh, Reagan's major political opponent. The present article is my response to Cannon's book, which I would otherwise have included in my Unruh study. The latter is now in print. See Jackson K. Putnam, *Jess: The Political Career of Jesse Marvin Unruh*, (Lanham, MD.: University Press of America, 2005). Hereafter I cite this book heavily rather than extensive newspaper and state legislative sources upon which the book is largely based.

⁶See *Los Angeles Times*: Cannon, "Terminator, You're No Great Communicator," Sep. 15, 2003, p. B11 and *Ibid.*; George Skelton, "Professed Followers of Reagan Should Try Following His Examples," Sep. 8, 2003, p. B5 and "As Political Drama, Reagan's Takeover Still Gets Top Billing," Oct. 27, 2003, p. B5; Matthew Dallek, "How an Actor Did It," Aug. 31, 2003, p. M3; Kevin Starr, "Fuse It-Or Lose It," Nov. 16, 2003, pp. M1, 3.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. M3. Starr here was discussing Arnold Schwarzenegger; thus the fourth governor on this list was Reagan.

⁸George Skelton, "Fabulous Delivery but Try It Again With Content," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 18, 2003, p. A21.

⁹Skelton, "Professed Followers . . ." see footnote 6, above.

¹⁰Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 196-197.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 199; Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 194.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 194-198; Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 197-204.

¹³Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 198.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 199.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 201. Kurt Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right: The Rise of the California Conservative Movement, 1945-1966* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe) pp. 138-139; Putnam, *Jess*, p. 213.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 202-204, 213-214; Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 202; Schuparra, *Triumph of the Right*, p. 146.

¹⁷Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 205.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 210. Cannon's account of this subject, pp. 208-214, is very admirably done.

¹⁹The following is taken almost entirely from Cannon's capable account: *Governor Reagan*, Chap. 21 "Conservationist," pp. 295-321. See also Ted Simon, *The River Stops Here: Saving Round Valley, A Pivotal Chapter in California's Water Wars* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), esp. Chap. 29. Cannon makes clear, however, that Reagan, as President, blatantly reversed himself on most environmental issues, *Governor Reagan*, pp. 319-321.

²⁰Cannon seems to be in error when he writes about this coastal initiative: "Reagan opposed it, arguing that the state should enforce existing coastal protection standards instead of creating a new layer of government," *Governor Reagan*, p. 315. Cannon may have been confused by Reagan's opposition to a group of legislative bills on the subject of coastal protection that preceded the formation of the initiative. When the campaign management firm of Whitaker and Baxter, representing special interests such as oil and utilities, attacked the initiative, it "received a rebuttal from Governor Reagan," Roy Jackson Dent, "Law, Science, and Social Concern: Federal and California Environmental Policy During the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," MA Thesis, California State University, Fullerton, 1994, pp. 263-267.

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 253-254. Curiously, Cannon does not mention this law, which began as AB-2045. See Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 312-313.

²²Edward L. Barrett, *The Tenney Committee* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1951; Ingrid W. Scobie, "Jack B. Tenney and the 'Parasitic Menace': Anticommunist Legislation in California, 1940-1949," *Pacific Historical Review*, 34, May 1974, pp. 188-121.

²³Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 96-99.

²⁴W. J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War: The 1960s* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989), pp. 41-44 ff. 103-105.

²⁵Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 99, 295-296, 357.

²⁶Cannon deals with all of these issues capably in *Governor Reagan*, Chap. 20 "Regent," except that he misses the main point about Reagan's decision not to appoint the McCone commission and the aftermath. See p. 278, especially footnote 15. Although Reagan later advocated legislative crack-downs on student unrest, he was foiled by the legislature, which in 1969 passed several laws supporting Unruh's policy of facilitating college officials and local police in maintaining order on campuses. Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 292-296. Reagan prospered politically if not legislatively by advocating tough measures against allegedly "radical" students and professors. Gerard DeGroot, "Ronald Reagan and Student Unrest in California," *Pacific Historical Review* (February 1996), pp. 107-129. Reagan soon halted his budget slashes on higher education, and, as Cannon points out, overall spending in this area increased by 136 percent during his tenure.

²⁷Gary Hamilton and Nicole Bigart, *Governor Reagan, Governor Brown* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), pp. 186-190. Cannon notes that Reagan's experience in making movies, which employed experts and were centrally directed, reinforced his liking of such a system despite its bureaucratic dimensions. His "reliance on bureaucratic expertise ratified his life experience at the expense of his ideology," *Governor Reagan*, p. 227.

²⁸Putnam, "Pattern," pp. 27-30.

²⁹Hamilton and Bigart, *Governor Reagan, Governor Brown*, pp. 153-154, 186-190. The quotation is on page 90.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 200.

³¹Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 208-209.

³²Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 193.

³³Putnam, *Jess*, p. 209.

³⁴*Governor Reagan*, pp. 193-194.

³⁵Cannon says this law "replaced warehousing of the mentally ill with community treatment centers," but these had long been provided for. In Short-Doyle, *Ibid.*, p. 193. Lanterman-Petris-Short did greatly expand community treatment and provided a patient "bill of rights," which by restricting the involuntary commitment of inmates, did, as Cannon says, contribute to the contemporary problem of many homeless expatriates living on the streets.

⁶Nicholas C. Petris, Oral History Interview, California State Archives, State Government Oral History Project, 1989, pp. 110-111. See also Gale Cook, "Community Based Mental Health: A Promise Unfulfilled," *California Journal* (May 1989): 194-197.

⁷*Governor Reagan*, p. 193.

⁸Putnam, *Jess*, p. 210.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 210-211. Reagan was further angered by the fact that the court case was brought by the California Rural Legal Assistance Office, a liberal organization that he despised and sought unsuccessfully to curtail. *Ibid.*, p. 238, note 158.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 211.

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 211-212.

¹²When Unruh highjacked an appropriations bill (AB6) and converted it into a measure providing bail-out funds for Medi-Cal, he governor said of the money involved that Unruh's action would amount to "spending it twice," *Ibid.*, p. 239, note 164. Reagan was apparently unaware that such a diversion of funds, a common action in the legislature, would negate the bill's original spending purpose. Reagan had almost no knowledge of the legislative process and no respect for it as well. He often referred to it as legislative "fun and games."

¹³Putnam, *Jess*, p. 211.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 212. See also Bill Boyarsky, *The Rise of Ronald Reagan* (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 259.

¹⁵Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 212-213; Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 255. Cannon, most unenlighteningly, devotes less than a page to this entire Medi-Cal controversy.

¹⁶Jackson K. Putnam, *Old-Age Politics in California: From Richardson to Reagan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1970), pp. 137-138.

¹⁷He also vetoed a bill to eliminate deductions from the pension checks of aged homeowners for the monetary value of such occupancy, *Ibid.*, p. 138.

¹⁸He repeated the pass-on seizure in 1968 and federal enactments gave state pensioners some relief in 1969, *Sacramento Bee*, Mar. 7, 1968, pp. A1, 4. His cessation of this policy is covered in Ann B. Jenkins, "Legislative-Executive Duel Ends With Signing of Social Security Pass-On Bill," *California Journal* (October 1970), pp. 284-285, 294.

¹⁹Putnam, *Modern California Politics*, 4th ed. (1966), p. 56; Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 200; Kent H. Steffgen, *Here's the Rest of Him* (Reno: Foresight Books, 1968.)

²⁰Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 200.

²¹Governors Frank Merriam (1934-1938) and Goodwin Knight (1953-1958) are good examples of rightists becoming moderates, while Friend W. Richardson (1923-1926 inclusive) and Culbert L. Olson (1939-1942 inclusive) were ideologists, the former right-wing and the latter left, who failed to moderate and paid a price for it. See Putnam, "Pattern . . .," *PHR*, 61, pp. 28-34.

²²Putnam, *Jess*, p. 214.

²³For a more extended discussion of the subject, see Putnam, *Modern California Politics*, 3rd ed. 1990, pp. 61-63 and "Pattern . . ." *PHR*, 61, pp. 41-44.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 44.

²⁵Reagan, *An American Life*, p. 182.

²⁶Richard Rodda, "End to End, Task Force Reports Would Reach the Moon," *Sacramento Bee*, Feb. 11, 1968, p. B2.

²⁷*Ibid.*, Mar. 31, 1968, p. A3.

²⁸On September 24, 1965, replying to many queries about his alleged sympathy for the sentiments of the John Birch Society, Reagan issued a statement saying "that he had decided not to solicit support from 'any blocs or groups,' but would seek support from individuals 'by persuading them to accept my philosophy, not by my accepting theirs.'" Matthew Dallek, *The Right Moment: Ronald Reagan's First Victory and the Decisive Turning Point in American Politics* (New York: Free Press, 2000), pp. 124-125.

²⁹*Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, Sixteenth Edition (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1992) p. 719, par 17.

³⁰Putnam, *Jess*, p. 224; *Sacramento Bee*, 1968: Apr. 16, pp. A1, 4; Apr. 21, p. B2.

³¹Putnam, *Jess*, p. 224. Unruh pointed out that the plan would add some 60,000 impecunious Californians to the income tax rolls, raise the tax of those earning \$6,000 a year from \$0 to \$16, and of those with annual incomes of \$8,000 from \$24 to \$42, while Californians making \$15,000 (a high income in those low inflation years) would enjoy an income tax reduction. *Ibid.*, p. 246, note 311.

³²*Ibid.*, pp. 224-225.

³³*Ibid.*, pp. 225-226.

³⁴Unruh did score some debating points against Reagan when the latter floated a proposal to enact a farcical little oxymoron called "voluntary withholding." He demonstrated that the governor was engaged in some very "illogical confused thinking" on the issue, but the exchange was soon over. *Ibid.*, p. 226. Cannon also calls this idea an "oddball provision," *Governor Reagan*, p. 330.

³⁵Putnam, *Jess*, p. 227. It was named after its author, Los Angeles County Assessor Phillip Watson.

³⁶For the current year the qualifying taxpayer received a "homeowner's exemption" of \$750, netting him or her a refund averaging about \$70, that is, 7.5 times the average tax rate of \$9.40 per \$100 of assessed valuation. In subsequent years, the exemption would be stated on his property tax bill. Single renters had their standard income tax exemptions raised from \$500 to \$1,000, married renters from \$1,000 to \$2,000. *Ibid.*, pp. 227-228.

³⁷State of California, *Statement of Vote*, General Election, November 5, 1968, pp. 27, 30.

³⁸Richard Rodda, "Reagan, Sen. Miller Are Miscast as Tax Cut Champions," *Sacramento Bee*, Sep. 29, 1968, p. B2. Cannon incredibly gives Reagan sole credit for the measure as though Unruh, Miller, and indeed the entire legislature had nothing to do with it, *Governor Reagan*, p. 324.

³⁹Of the hundreds of sources on this election, see especially Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President 1968* (New York: Atheneum, 1969) and Frank A. Jonas and John L. Harmer "The 1968 Election in California," *Western Political Quarterly* 22 (September 1969): 468-474.

⁴⁰Actually only the assembly had a Republican majority beginning in 1969 as the two parties in the senate were tied. On January 1, 1969, however, Senator Miller died, and in March Republican John A. Nejedly won Miller's seat, giving his party a 21-19 majority there. Putnam, *Jess*, p. 276.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 280.

⁴²According to one student of Reagan's career: "After almost three months in office, when asked by reporters what his legislative

¹⁰³ The main exception to this statement is that Republicans won four of the five constitutional offices (attorney general, treasurer, controller, and lieutenant governor), the one Democrat winner being future Governor Jerry Brown as secretary of state. However, Republican U. S. Senator George Murphy also lost to John Tunney and the officially nonpartisan office of Superintendent of Public Instruction was won by Democrat Wilson Riles against the adamantly right-wing Republican incumbent Max Rafferty. Cannon gives a good summation of these races, *Governor Reagan*, p. 346.

¹⁰⁴ Royce Delmatier, et al., eds., *The Rumble of California Politics, 1848-1970* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1970), pp. 391-392.

¹⁰⁵ Syndicated columnist Joseph Kraft predicted early in the year that the Democrats on both the East and West Coasts "will probably have to go through years of sorting out before they are in position to challenge strongly in New York or California," *Sacramento Bee*, Jan. 19, 1970, p. A17.

¹⁰⁶ See oral history interviews with Bagley, Monagan, and James Mills in *The Assembly, the State Senate, and the Governor's Office, 1958-1974* (Regional Oral History Office, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley, 1982). Veneman and Bagley had also committed the cardinal sin of backing George Christopher against Reagan in the 1966 Republican primary.

¹⁰⁷ Monagan, *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 32, 64; Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 363-364. Here Reagan's constantly conservative political rhetoric ironically backfired on him. As noted, he had been far less conservative in action than his rhetoric indicated.

¹⁰⁸ Monagan did agree to attack Unruh as a "boss politician" as Reagan demanded, and did so, *Ibid.*, p. 364; *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 12, 1970, Part I, p. 24.

¹⁰⁹ Putnam, *Jess*, p. 364. See also oral history interview with James Mills (footnote #106), pp. 94-98, 107. Mills was one of the senators whom Reagan tried to purge.

¹¹⁰ *Sacramento Bee*, Oct. 11, 1970, p. E2.

¹¹¹ Richard Rodda "Demos Gain In Statewide Registration Battle," *Sacramento Bee*, Jan. 30, 1970, pp. A1, 16. The gain in Democratic registration noted by Rodda was very small. A year earlier the respective figures had been: Democrats, 54 percent; Republicans 41.4 percent.

¹¹² Putnam, *Jess*, pp. 364-365; Anderson and Bell, "The 1970 Election," *Western Political Quarterly* (June 1971): p. 254; Daryl Lembke, "State Democrats Launch Drive to Reform Structure of Party," *Los Angeles Times*, June 14, 1970, Sec. A, p. 13. See also clippings from *San Francisco Examiner*, June 13, 1970; *Oakland Tribune*, June 15, 1970; *Wall Street Journal*, Sep. 8, 1970 in Ronald Reagan Gubernatorial Library, Research Unit, Box 44, Simi Valley, California.

¹¹³ Phillip H. Schott, Unruh's campaign manager, gives a good account of this operation, Oral History Interview, California State Archives, oral History Project (1990), p. 269. The Democrats gained 393,230 new registrants to the Republicans' 194,079. The official percentages rose for the Democrats from 54.4 to 54.9 and fell for the Republicans from 40.7 to 39.8. Anderson and Bell, "The 1970 Election," *Western Political Quarterly* (June 1971): 254.

¹¹⁴ Putnam, *Jess*, p. 365; *Sacramento Bee*, Nov. 4, 1970, p. A9; *Statement of Vote, State of California, General Election*, Nov. 3, 1970, pp. 22-23, 26-30; *Statement of Vote, Consolidated Primary Election*, June 6, 1972, p. 46. "Democrats Win Control of Senate and Assembly," *California Journal* (November 1970): 304-305, 318. The Republicans gained nominal control of the assembly in the 1994 election, but due to intra-party quarrels exacerbated by the machinations of speaker and ex-speaker Willie Brown they were prevented from exercising control there for more than a year. They never did gain control of the state senate and lost their assembly majority in November 1996, Putnam, *Modern California Politics*, 4th ed., pp. 109-112, 118-120; "Congress and the Legislature," *California Journal*, Dec. 1996, p. 9.

¹¹⁵ Putnam, *Jess*, p. 366. Anderson and Bell, "The 1970 Election," *Western Political Quarterly* (June 1971): 252.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 388-389; "Electing Legislative Leadership: How It's Done," *California Journal* (November 1970): 311, 322.

¹¹⁷ Putnam, *Jess*, p. 389. On Mill's sustained relationship with Unruh, see his *A Disorderly House: The Brown-Unruh Years in Sacramento* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1987).

¹¹⁸ *Governor Reagan*, p. 360.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 359. An excellent in-depth study reaching the same conclusion is Garin Burbank, "Governor Reagan and California Welfare Reform: The Grand Compromise

of 1971," *California History* (Fall 1991): 278-289, 328-330. See also Putnam, *Jess*, p. 394.

¹²⁰ *Governor Reagan*, p. 360.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp. 360-361; Burbank (see footnote 122 above), pp. 287-289.

¹²³ Among the ideological ambiguities abounding in the passage of this act are the following facts: Moretti, a strong liberal and supposedly sensitive to the stereotype of welfare recipient as chiseler, said: "We had no desire to protect the goddam welfare cheats. We were just as glad to get rid of them as [Reagan] was." (Burbank, p. 282); Willie Brown, an ultra-liberal, voted against the bill in part because it was too expensive, and ultra-conservative legislators Peter Schabarum and H. L. Richardson shared this opinion (*Ibid.*, p. 287, James Richardson, *Willie Brown*, p. 189); and among the causes for whatever welfare caseload reduction that did occur after the passage of this act was the high probability that many female recipients availed themselves of the opportunity for free abortions under the 1967 act, which Reagan had signed and now repudiated, Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 361, Burbank, p. 288.

¹²⁴ Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 364; Putnam, *Jess*, p. 393.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*; Garin Burbank, "Speaker Moretti, Governor Reagan, and the Search for Tax Reform in California, 1970-1972," *Pacific Historical Review* (May 1992): 200; Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 363.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

¹²⁷ All of the bill's main provisions are in Burbank (see footnote 125 above), pp. 210-211, and note 75). See also *California Journal* (December 1972): 368-369.

¹²⁸ Putnam, *Modern California Politics*, 3rd ed. (1990), p. 68, 4th ed. (1996), p. 60.

¹²⁹ Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 370; Putnam, *Jess*, p. 393.

¹³⁰ The following account of the Proposition 1 campaign is taken primarily from Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, chap. 24, and Garin Burbank, "Governor Reagan's Only Defeat: The Proposition 1 Campaign in 1973," *California History* (Winter 1993/94): 360-373, 395-397.

¹³¹ *Governor Reagan*, p. 368.

¹³²Burbank, (see footnote 133 above), pp. 364-365, especially footnote 25.

¹³³Cannon says the governor's forces spent nearly \$2 million qualifying the initiative and campaigning for it. The opponents spent \$375,000, *Governor Reagan*, p. 375.

¹³⁴After his election loss in 1973 Reagan was forced by the Democrats and a federal court decision at the end of the year to raise assistance grants for the aged, blind, and disabled much higher than he wished. Ultra-liberal assemblyman John Burton pushed this bill through the legislature, probably to the governor's additional pique. See Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 383 and Putnam, *Modern California Politics*, 3rd ed., 1990, p. 70.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 70-71; T. Anthony Quinn, "Carving Up California: A History of Redistricting, 1951-1984," Ph.D. dissertation, Rose Institute of State and Local Government, Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, California, nd, pp. 40-42.

¹³⁶*Ibid.*; Putnam (see footnote 134 above), pp. 70-71. Earlier in the year Reagan had also suffered the embarrassment of having one of his vetoes overridden in the legislature, Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, p. 384. This was a rare occurrence at the time, although Reagan's successor would soon quadruple his record on veto overrides, Putnam (see footnote 134 above) pp. 81, 87. This constituted just one of several such "attainments" of the Jerry Brown administration.

¹³⁷On Reagan's quixotic presidential bid in 1976, Cannon is masterful, *Governor Reagan*, chapter 26. On his continuing radio and newspaper performances see *Ibid.*, pp. 437, 544, footnote 1.

¹³⁸*Ibid.*, chapter 28.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 444-447. See also Andrew E. Busch, *Reagan's Victory: The Presidential Election of 1980 and the Rise of the Right* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2005), Chap. 1-3.

¹⁴⁰Cannon deals with Jarvis-Gann briefly on pages 446-447, and more so on pages 324, and 381, but in my opinion vastly understates its effects on Reagan's presidential efforts and Reagan's rather dishonest reaction to it. An excellent extended discussion of Jarvis-Gann can be found in Peter Schrag, *Paradise Lost: California's Experience and America's Future* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), Part III. See also

Mark Baldassare, *A California State of Mind: The Conflicted Voter in a Changing World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), Chap. 3.

¹⁴¹For a more detailed treatment of Brown's motivations and subsequent career, see Putnam, *Modern California Politics*, 4th ed (1996), pp. 62-77. See also Schrag, *Paradise Lost*, pp. 142-148, 150, 153-154, 163.

¹⁴²*Governor Reagan*, p. 406.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 447. Cannon accepts this rather absurd notion by arguing that "Jarvis was the architect of tax limitation, but Reagan was its prophet," *Ibid.*, p. 381.

¹⁴⁵Schrag, *Paradise Lost*, p. 153 ff. The remainder of Schrag's book details how Proposition 13 and its successors have combined to maximize public problems and to render the state's political institutions increasingly powerless to deal with them. Baldassare's book (see footnote 143 above) also demonstrates this.

¹⁴⁶Cannon, *Governor Reagan*, pp. 132-133.

¹⁴⁷Robert Moretti, whose opinion merits respect, once judged Reagan surprisingly as "better than Pat Brown," and unsurprisingly as "miles, planets, and universes better than Jerry Brown," *Ibid.*, p. 366.

ARTURO R. TIRADO AND THE TEATRO AZTECA: MEXICAN POPULAR CULTURE IN THE CENTRAL SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BY MANUEL G. GONZALES, PP 46-63

¹The southern two-thirds of the Great Central Valley of California, the San Joaquin extends some two hundred and fifty miles from the Delta in the north to the Tehachapi Mountains in the south. The San Joaquin Valley consists of eight counties (from north to south): San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern. For the Mexican presence in North America, see Manuel G. Gonzales, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

²Mendota and Huron, two farming towns in western Fresno County, illustrate this demographic shift in dramatic fashion. In the 1940s and 1950s, when I lived in these communities, both were predominantly white. Massive immigration in the past forty years, however, has brought a vast sea change. According to the 2000 federal census, Latinos

constitute 94.7 percent and 98.3 percent of the populations of Mendota and Huron, respectively. For a recent example of local anti-Mexican sentiment, see Victor Davis Hanson, *Mexifornia: A State of Becoming* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2003). A Selma farmer, Hanson is a retired professor from the classics department at California State University at Fresno.

³Frank F. Latta, "Mendota's Las Juntas: The Valley's First Settlement," *Fresno: Past and Present* (June 1971), Fresno Historical Society Archival Collections, <http://valleyhistory.org/PandP/lasjuntas.html>.

⁴Exceptions include two brief, and nearly identical, 1980 studies: Alex Saragoza, *Fresno's Hispanic Heritage* (Fresno, CA: San Diego Federal Savings and Loan Association), and Lea Ybarra, *Nuestras Raíces: The Mexican Community in the Central San Joaquin Valley* (Fresno, CA: TEACH Project, La Raza Studies, California State University, Fresno).

⁵Cletus E. Daniel, *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870-1941* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 43.

⁶Cotton cultivation in California increased by 400 percent in the 1920s. Mark Reisler, *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Mexican Immigrant Labor in the United States, 1900-1940* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), 78.

⁷Kevin Starr, *Endangered Dreams: The Great Depression in California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 65.

⁸*Ibid.*, 75. For an insightful study of the role of Mexicans in the rise of the California cotton industry before 1940, see Devra Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California's Farm Workers, Cotton, and the New Deal* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

⁹The Boswell empire was created by Colonel J.G. Boswell and expanded after his death in 1952 by his nephew and namesake, James Griffin Boswell. Focusing on the latter (J.G. Boswell II), Mark Arax and Rick Wartzman, *The King of California: J.G. Boswell and the Making of a Secret American Empire* (New York: Public Affairs, 2003), have written an excellent family biography.

¹⁰Saragoza, *Fresno's Hispanic Heritage*, 45.

¹¹According to one estimate, as many as one million Mexicans in the United States

may have repatriated in the 1930s. Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 158.

¹²Starr, *Endangered Dreams*, 67.

¹³The process of trading in their nomadic existence for the greater security of these farming communities can be traced back to the late 1930s. Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 68.

¹⁴Saragoza, *Fresno's Hispanic Heritage*, 60.

¹⁵Douglas S. Massey, Jorge Durand, and Nolan J. Malone, *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigration in an Era of Economic Integration* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 59.

¹⁶David G. Gutiérrez, "Ethnic Mexicans and the Transformation of 'American' Social Space: Reflections on Recent History," in *Crossings: Mexican Immigration in Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 321.

¹⁷Saragoza, *Fresno's Hispanic Heritage*, 43.

¹⁸Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 67. In 1930, Fresno had a total population of 52,000; the Valley population was 540,000. James N. Gregory, *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 56. "Fresno, Tulare, and Kern counties rank one, two, and three nationally as agricultural producers most years," according to one of the Valley's most distinguished authors, Gerald Haslem, who wrote the text for *The Great Central Valley: California's Heartland*, a photographic project by Stephen Johnson and Robert Dawson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 18.

¹⁹For a good first-hand account of the life of a farm worker in the Valley, see *Migrant Daughter: Coming of Age as a Mexican American Woman* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), by Frances Esquibel Tywniak, written in collaboration with the historian Mario T. García. Frances Esquibel, born in New Mexico in 1931, and her family worked as migrant laborers up and down the Valley before they eventually settled down in Visalia.

²⁰"A History of Mexican Americans in California: Historic Sites, KGST Radio Station," *Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey*

for California (Mexican Americans), http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/5views/5viewssh46.htm.

²¹Weber, *Dark Sweat, Dark Gold*, 251. The historian Gilbert G. González gives a good description of the particulars of these patriotic celebrations in *Labor and Community: Mexican Citrus Worker Villages in a Southern California County, 1900–1950* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 78–84.

²²Already by 1933, there were four *mutalistas* in the city. Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 252.

²³Taped interview with Arturo Tirado, Santa Barbara, California, August 7, 1996, by the author. The audiotape is in the author's possession. The specific date of birth was September 3, 1912, according to Tirado's obituary in the *Fresno Bee*, January 21, 1998.

²⁴For brief biographies of Romualdo Tirado (1880–1963), see Nicolás Kanellos, "Theater," in *The Hispanic Almanac: From Columbus to Corporate America*, ed. Nicolás Kanellos (Detroit, Mich.: Visible Ink Press, 1994), 493–94; and Juan B. Heinink and Robert G. Dickson, "Biografías," Part 2 of *Los que pasaron por Hollywood*, 2d ed. (2000), Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/cine/12826400880173731865846/ind...> Heinink and Dickson also include concise biographies of Tirado's wife Matilde Liñán (1881–1971) and her sister Filomena Liñán, both of them accomplished stage and film actresses. Romualdo, then serving in the Spanish military, was an eye-witness to the explosion of the U.S. battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898, according to his granddaughter Virginia Tirado Fitzpatrick, telephone interview with the author on December 29, 2004. The notes of this, and other personal interviews used here, are in the author's possession.

²⁵Interview with Arturo Tirado, August 7, 1996. Mr. Tirado recalled that this performance attended by Villa and Zapata occurred in 1913. However, this date is almost certainly in error. The following year is a better guess; it is well documented that the two celebrated revolutionary heroes conferred on the outskirts of Mexico City in early December 1914, and apparently "the two leaders had never met before." Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 537.

²⁶Interview with Arturo Tirado, Fresno, California, July 11, 1974, by Mary Castañeda, oral interview collection, California History & Genealogy Room, Fresno County Public Library, Fresno, California. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Ray Silvia and William B. Secrest, special collections archivists of the Fresno County Public Library, who extended me every courtesy as I researched this project.

²⁷Kanellos, "Theater," 453. Once he arrived in Los Angeles, Romualdo did not waste much time before he made an impact. It was under his direction that in 1921 the Teatro Principal there launched the first competition, with prizes, to encourage Spanish-speaking playwrights to create works suitable for stage production. Leticia Urbina Orduña, "Teatro Chicano: Un Secreto que da voces," <http://www.xoc.uam.mx/~cuaree/no37/seis/antecedente.html>.

²⁸Catherine Wiley, "Teatro Chicano and the Seduction of Nostalgia," *Melus* 23 (Spring 1998), http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2278/jis_l_23/ai_53501900/.

²⁹Interview with Arturo Tirado, July 11, 1974. According to Heinink and Dickson, "Biografías," Tirado owned the theater in partnership with Ernesto González Jiménez and Arturo Pallais, Jr., from 1927 to 1936, when it closed.

³⁰For a film biography of the elder Tirado, including a list of thirty-three films in which he appeared, see "Romualdo Tirado," Internet Movie Database, <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0864203/>. During the 1940s, Romualdo Tirado spent most of his time outside the Golden State. He worked first in Puerto Rico and then in New York City, where he was employed by the Teatro Hispano. Kanellos, "Theater," 493.

³¹Unless otherwise indicated, the biographical facts relating to Arturo Tirado's life were supplied by his daughter Virginia Tirado Fitzpatrick in the telephone interview of December 29, 2004.

³²Interview with Arturo Tirado, July 11, 1974.

³³Telephone interview with Virginia Tirado Fitzpatrick, December 29, 2004.

³⁴Interview with Arturo Tirado, July 11, 1974.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶Interview with Virginia Tirado Fitzpatrick, Orinda, California, January 27, 2005, by the author. Among Tirado's

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accounting clients during the war, Mrs. Fitzpatrick recalls, was the celebrated scientist Enrico Fermi.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Interview with Arturo Tirado, July 11, 1974. Built by Gustavo Acosta, the Azteca Theater first opened on November 30, 1948, according to *La Opinión* (Los Angeles), December 27, 1948. This article was brought to my attention by Rogelio Agrasánchez, Jr., e-mail communication, January 27, 2005. My thanks to Rogelio and his wife Xóchitl Fernández for their generous help and encouragement during this project. One of his employees at the time recalls that during the late 1940s, Mr. Acosta owned a burlesque palace on F Street called the Cal Theater, which was managed by the owner's father. Jo Negrete Baslam, interview with the author, Fresno, California, January 6, 2005. There were two other motion picture theaters on F Street during the 1940s: the Lyceum and the Rex. See "The Historic West Fresno," a map of Chinatown in 1941, by Norman P. Abe, California History & Genealogy Room, Fresno County Public Library, Fresno, California.

⁴⁰ In Mexico, the historian David Maciel argues, films remained "the most important artistic forms of popular entertainment" up to the 1960s. "Pocho and Other Extremes in Mexican Cinema; or, El Cine Mexicano se va de Bracero, 1922-1963," in *Chicanos and Film: Representation and Resistance*, ed. Chon A. Noriega (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 95.

⁴¹ Douglas Monroy, *Rebirth: Mexican Los Angeles from the Great Migration to the Great Depression* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 173.

⁴² For Latino actors and actresses on the silver screen, see George Hadley-García, *Hispanic Hollywood: The Latins in Motion Pictures* (New York: Carol Publishing, 1990). Ramón Novarro (1899-1968) and Dolores del Río (1905-1983) were second cousins. *The Illustrated Who's Who of the Cinema*, ed. Ann Lloyd and Graham Fuller (New York: Portland House, 1987), 118.

⁴³ Although the dates can be debated, in general most scholars define the Golden Age as the period between 1935 and 1962. Melissa Castillo-Garsow, "Mexico's Golden Age of Film and Screen Stars," November 12, 2004, NYU Livewire Website, [http://](http://journalism.nyu.edu/pubzone/livewire/000209.php)

journalism.nyu.edu/pubzone/livewire/000209.php. For the history of Mexican film during this remarkable period, see Jorge Ayala Blanco, *La Aventura del cine mexicano en la época de oro y después* (Miguel Hidalgo, México, D.F.: Editorial Grijalbo, 1993); Gustavo García and Rafael Aviña, *Época de oro del cine mexicano* (México, D.F.: Editorial Clio, 1997); and Rogelio Agrasánchez Jr., *Cine Mexicano: Poster Art from the Golden Age, 1936-1958: Carteles de la época de oro, 1936-1956* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001). For the impact of Mexican films on Mexican-American audiences during these years, see the pioneering work of Alex Saragoza, "Mexican Cinema in the United States, 1940-1952," in *History, Culture, and Society: Chicano Studies in the 1980s*, National Association of Chicano Studies (Ypsilanti, Mich.: Bilingual Press/Editorial Bilingüe, 1983), 107-24.

⁴⁴ Jennifer Liu, "A New Golden Age for the Silver Screen? The Mexican Film Industry," <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~drclas/publications/revista/mexico/Liu.html>.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Charles Nafus, "Poster Art From the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema/Carteles de la Época de Oro del Cine Mexicano," *The Austin Chronicle*, <http://www.austinchronicle.com/issues/vol7/issue45/screens.cinedeoro.html>.

⁴⁶ No one has chronicled the anti-Mexican prejudice of the time better than Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 5th ed. (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004), chaps. 10-11.

⁴⁷ "Mexican Cinema in the United States."

⁴⁸ F. Arturo Rosales uses the theater to make this same point, in "Spanish-language Theatre and Early Mexican Immigration," in *Hispanic Theatre in the United States*, ed. Nicolás Kanellos (Houston: Arte Público, 1984), 15-23.

⁴⁹ The Mexican film industry, which began in 1896, made over one hundred silent films and documentaries prior to 1930. Joanne Hershfield, *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman, 1940-1950* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 36. For good introductions to Mexican cinema, see Carl J. Mora, *Mexican Cinema: Reflections of a Society, 1896-1988*, rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), and Joanne Hershfield and David R. Maciel, eds., *Mexico's Cinema: A Century of Film and Filmmakers* (Wilmington, DE: SR Books, 1999).

⁵⁰ George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 179.

⁵¹ Robert G. Dickson, "Los Orígenes y desarrollo del cine hispano," in *México-Estados Unidos: Encuentros y desencuentros en el cine*, ed. Ignacio Durán, Iván Trujillo, and Mónica Vereá (México, D.F.: IMCINE, 1996), 55.

⁵² Antonio Ríos-Bustamante and Pedro Castillo, *An Illustrated History of Mexican Los Angeles, 1781-1985* (Los Angeles: Chicano Studies Research Center, University of California, 1986), 171. Frank Fouce, was born in Hawaii in 1899 and died in Hollywood in 1962. "Frank Fouce Biography," Internet Movie Database, <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0288224/>. At the time of his death, Fouce was a business associate of Mexican media mogul Emilio Azcárraga Vidaurreta (who built the Churubusco Studios in the 1940s) in both Los Angeles and San Antonio. Kristin C. Moran, "The Development of Spanish-Language Television in San Diego: A Contemporary History," *Journal of San Diego History* 50 (Winter/Spring 2004): 53. His son Frank Fouce Jr. succeeded the elder Fouce as president of Fouce Amusement Enterprises, Inc., which expanded into the television industry.

⁵³ "Broadway Theater Tour: The Million Dollar Theater," *Rialto GMR Theater Tour*, <http://www.gmrnet.com/theaters.html>. "As early as the 1950s, the Million Dollar became the first theater on Broadway to feature Spanish-language variety shows, including headline acts from Mexico City." *Experience LA*, http://www.experienceca.com/directory.asp?start=318&Category_Type=All_Categories&letter=m.

⁵⁴ Leonard Pitt and Dale Pitt, *Los Angeles A to Z: An Encyclopedia of the City and the County* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 339.

⁵⁵ Juan R. García, *Mexicans in the Midwest, 1900-1932* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 194.

⁵⁶ Joan London and Henry Anderson, *So Shall Ye Reap: The Story of Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers' Movement* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1970), 143.

⁵⁷ For a concise history of Latino theater in the United States, see Nicolás Kanellos, "Theater," in *Hispanic Almanac*, 443-96.

- ⁵⁸ Richard Griswold del Castillo and Arnoldo De León, *North to Aztlán: A History of Mexicans in the United States* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996), 79.
- ⁵⁹ On the enigmatic actress, see James F. Farley, *Lola Montez: The California Adventures of Europe's Notorious Courtesan* (Spokane, WA: Arthur H. Clark, 1996).
- ⁶⁰ "Canciones del país: Mexican Musical Life in California after the Gold Rush," *California History* 78 (Fall 1999): 182. Theatrical entertainment in the Mexican-American communities of the United States generally lost out to Spanish-speaking vaudeville, films, and radio during the Depression, and it was not until the 1960s that it recovered. Elizabeth C. Ramírez, "Mexican-American Theater," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/print/MM/kkmvs.html>.
- ⁶¹ Interview with Arturo Tirado, August 7, 1996.
- ⁶² "Elementary Spanish," in *Highway 99: A Literary Journey through California's Great Central Valley*, ed. Stan Yogi (Berkeley: CA: Heyday Books, 1996), 131-32.
- ⁶³ Antonio Ríos-Bustamante, "Latino Participation in the Hollywood Film Industry, 1911-1945," in *Chicanos and Film*, 23. The distribution of Mexican films in the United States, a subject about which virtually nothing had been written before, is the main focus of a forthcoming book (August 2006) by Rogelio Agramón Jr., *Mexican Movies in the United States: A History of the Films, Theaters and Audiences, 1920-1960*. The original manuscript was titled "Tears, Passion and Rage: The Heyday of Mexican Movies in the United States." I was graciously given access to this manuscript by the author, who is owner and curator of the Agramón Film Archives, located in Harlingen, Texas, the world's largest private collection of Mexican cinema.
- ⁶⁴ Interview with Arturo Tirado, August 7, 1996. Tirado purchased a second theater, the Lyceum, in the Mission district of San Francisco, in the late 1950s. His daughter, who worked there in the summers, recalls that he held on to Lyceum "for about two years." Interview with Virginia Tirado Fitzpatrick, January 27, 2005.
- ⁶⁵ See *Spanish Pictures Exhibitors Association: Its Purposes, Its History, Its Aim* (n.p., [1961]), a brochure belonging to Mrs. Virginia Tirado Fitzpatrick.
- ⁶⁶ "One of the association's main 'purposes' was 'to encourage and foster the understanding and cooperation between Distributors and Exhibitors.'" *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁷ Interview with Arturo Tirado, August 7, 1996.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁹ The anecdotes on Félix, Lara, and Infante that follow were related by Tirado in the August 7, 1996, interview.
- ⁷⁰ Sheila Whitaker, "María Félix: Mexico's Iconic Beauty On and Off the Screen" (obituary), *Guardian* (U.K.), April 10, 2002, <http://film.guardian.co.uk/print/0,3858,4390850-100948,00.html>. On Dolores del Río: "Her legendary beauty allowed her to survive the passage from silent film to talkies. It was a beauty still admired in films made in the 1970s." Nicholas E. Meyer, *The Biographical Dictionary of Hispanic Americans* (New York: Facts On File, Inc., 1997), 69. Refusing to learn English, the independent-minded Félix pretty much blew Hollywood off, which accounts for her anonymity among American audiences. In Mexico, she is revered as a great actress. Somos, the prestigious Mexican film journal, devoted three issues exclusively to her life and work, the last published posthumously in April 2002.
- ⁷¹ "María Félix, Who2," <http://who2.com/mariafelix.html>.
- ⁷² Whitaker, "María Félix."
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁴ The year may have been 1959, when Tirado brought not only Agustín Lara but also Pedro Vargas, Antonio Aguilar, and El Mariachi Vargas, "among others," to his theaters in Fresno and San Francisco. Tirado letter to the editor, *La Novela Cine-GRAFICA* (Los Angeles), December-January 1960, 26. Rogelio Agramón Jr. supplied me with a copy of this letter.
- ⁷⁵ Mrs. Tirado must have remembered the episode with less amusement than her husband; some years later she threw an autographed picture of Lara into the garbage can. Telephone interview with Virginia Tirado Fitzpatrick, December 29, 2004.
- ⁷⁶ It was at this time that Pedro Infante, a box-office hit throughout the 1940s, made an appearance at the Million Dollar, shortly after Frank Fouce Sr. leased the famous theater. Agramón, "Tears, Passion and Rage," 54.
- ⁷⁷ Interview with Arturo Tirado, August 7, 1996.
- ⁷⁸ Interview with Carmen Acuña, Fresno, California, January 7, 2005, by the author.
- ⁷⁹ "Espectáculos: Se fue un ídolo que le cantaba a su México lindo y querido," *Azteca21*, <http://www.azteca21.com/noticias/antes/especta061202-01.html>.
- ⁸⁰ Raymundo Eli Rojas, "A Tribute to Pedro Infante," *Fiesta Del Mariachi*, <http://www.fiestaweb.org/Biographies/Pedro.cfm>.
- ⁸¹ The widespread adulation of Pedro Infante in the Spanish-speaking world is reflected in the title of a recent novel, *Loving Pedro Infante* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2002), by the Mexican-American author Denise Chávez. Infante has been called "the most idolized human being in the recent history" of Mexico (my translation). "Estrellas del Cine Mexicano: Pedro Infante," *Cine Mexicano*, <http://cinemexicano.mty.itesm.mx/estrellas/infante.html>. For the significance of the *comedia ranchera* in Mexican cinema, see Carlos A. Gutiérrez, "Hegemony and Resistance in Mexican and Brazilian Popular Cinemas," *La Vitrina*, <http://www.lavitrina.com/html/film/film%2012/film-mex-bra.html>.
- ⁸² Rojas, "Tribute."
- ⁸³ Liu, "A New Golden Age."
- ⁸⁴ Amy Pyle, "Arturo Tirado: Counselor, Comedian and Compadre," *Fresno Bee*, June 7, 1987. Apparently, the Azteca continued to operate under new management to 1986, when it finally went out of business. *CinemaTour: Cinemas Around the World*. "Azteca Theatre," <http://www.cinematour.com/tour.php?dh=us&id=16831>.
- ⁸⁵ *Fresno's Hispanic Heritage*, 66. Tirado served first as president and later vice president of the financial institution. Interview with Arturo Tirado, July 11, 1974.
- ⁸⁶ It has not been uncommon to see the Latino business elite come to the defense of the more vulnerable members of the ethnic community. For one well-known instance, in late nineteenth-century Tucson, see my biographical article, "Carlos I. Velasco and the Defense of Mexican Rights in Territorial Arizona," in *En Aquel Entonces: Readings in Mexican-American History*, ed. Manuel G. Gonzales and Cynthia M. Gonzales (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 96-103.

NOTES

⁸⁷Interview with Arturo Tirado, July 11, 1974.

⁸⁸Pyle, "Arturo Tirado."

⁸⁹*Fácil inmigración a los Estados Unidos* ["Easy Immigration to the United States"] (Los Angeles: Orbe Publications, 1981).

⁹⁰Interview with Arturo Tirado, August 7, 1996. Governor Reagan *did* appoint Tirado to the State Social Welfare Board, the Advisory Committee to the Preschool Educational Programs, the California Civil Rights Advocacy Committee, and the Advisory Council to the State Fair Employment Practices Commission. Perhaps best described as a Reagan Democrat, Mr. Tirado always remained ambivalent about his political party affiliation. A pragmatist, he was apparently willing to work with both major parties to ameliorate the plight of the underprivileged. An early leader of the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA), formed in Fresno in 1960, he later expressed

regret that the state-wide civil rights organization had completely abandoned working with the Republicans, thereby forsaking its initial bipartisan stance. Interview with Arturo Tirado, July 11, 1974.

⁹¹Interview with Arturo Tirado, August 7, 1996.

⁹²Father Mahony, a strong supporter of the farm worker cause, delivered Chávez's funeral oration in 1993. "The Story of César Chávez," UFW, <http://www.ufw.org/cecstory.htm>.

⁹³Interview with Arturo Tirado, August 7, 1996.

⁹⁴*Ibid.* Fresno's most progressive Latino civic leaders, almost all of them Democrats, were so grateful for Mayor Hyde's willingness to assist Chávez on his 1966 march that they generally supported the Republican mayor during his remaining years in office.

Interview with George Acuña, Fresno, California, January 6, 2005, by the author.

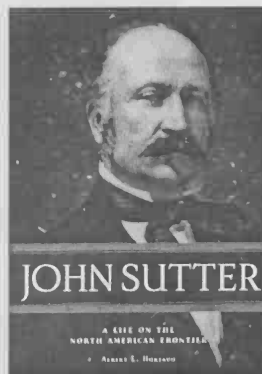
⁹⁵Interview with Arturo Tirado, July 11, 1974.

⁹⁶See Tirado obituary, *Fresno Bee*, January 21, 1998.

⁹⁷He was predeceased by his son Denis, who died in a car accident in his early twenties, a tragedy that left Arturo "devastated," according to one of his best friends. Interview with George Acuña, January 6, 2005.

⁹⁸See, for example, Arthur G. Pettit, *Images of the Mexican American in Fiction and Film* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1980). The history of negative stereotyping of Latinos by Hollywood is graphically illustrated in a 2003 documentary film, *The Bronze Screen: 100 Years of the Latino Image in American Cinema*, produced and directed by Susan Racho, Nancy de los Santos, and Alberto Domínguez.

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REVIEWS

Edited by James J. Rawls

AMERICAN PROPHET: The Life and Work of Carey McWilliams

By Peter Richardson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005, 334 pp., cloth, \$35)

REVIEWED BY ROBERT W. CHERNY, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

Peter Richardson, editorial director at PoliPointPress in Sausalito, has given us a biography of a man he had never heard of in 1999. Directed to the books of Carey McWilliams, Richardson was so taken that he wrote this, the first published biography of McWilliams.

Richardson quotes Kevin Starr as calling McWilliams “the single finest non-fiction writer on California—ever.” (vii) The biography fleshes out the life story of this often provocative and usually highly perceptive commentator on California life. Primarily a literary biography, the book centers on McWilliams’s writings and carefully analyzes each of his books and his editorial contributions for the *Nation*. Richardson treats other aspects of McWilliams’s life, especially those necessary for understanding his writings and their reception.

Born in Colorado in 1905, son of a Democratic party leader, McWilliams was expelled from the University of Denver for carousing. He followed his mother to Los Angeles, where he resumed his studies—and carousing. His first writings were on literary topics, and his first book was a biography of his journalistic idol, Ambrose

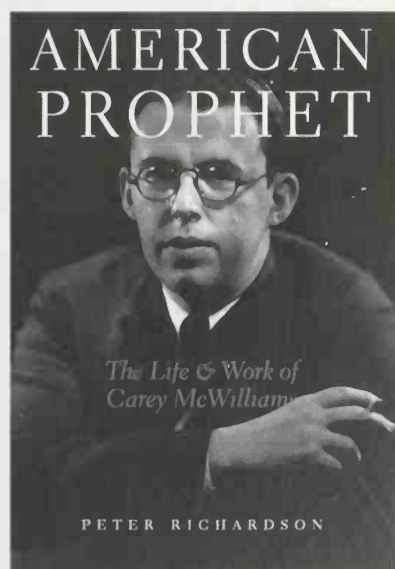
Bierce. Initially an admirer of H. L. Mencken, McWilliams’s politics moved left and further left with the onset of the Depression, coming close to the Communist party (CP). In his writings, he discerned fascism emerging in California and, according to Richardson, “sought to make any middle ground between capitalism and communism uninhabitable.” (p. 76) But he refused to join the CP because of his objections to “the state of affairs in Russia” (p. 79), party discipline, and the many required meetings, and he moved away from CP rhetoric by late 1940.

Factories in the Field (1939), McWilliams’s first widely popular book, vividly portrayed the exploitation and suffering of California farmworkers. By then, he had accepted an appointment to head the state commission on immigration and housing, with a specific charge to do something about farm labor. *Factories in the Field* and *Ill Fares the Land* (1942) gave McWilliams a nationwide reputation as an author on farm labor. The wartime relocation of Japanese Americans and the Zoot Suit riots led McWilliams to examine race and ethnicity, leading to several books. He also produced *Southern California Country* (1946), which the *Los Angeles Times Magazine* in 2002 named the best book about Los Angeles ever written (p. 161). Similarly, *California: The Great Exception* (1949) has been praised as one of the most perceptive and influential works ever published on the state.

McWilliams became West Coast editor for the *Nation* and, in 1951, editor (necessitating a move to New York

City), which position he held until late 1975. Richardson notes that, during the years McWilliams spent editing the *Nation*, he “helped others find their voices but gradually lost his own” (p. 298), as he wrote no books. *The Education of Carey McWilliams*, which many have found less than satisfying, appeared in 1979. McWilliams died in 1980.

Richardson notes the resurgence of interest in and appreciation for McWilliams’s work among recent scholars, and attributes this to McWilliams’ style, to the current interest in and perceived need for public intellectuals able to write for a large reading public on a range of current issues, and to McWilliams’ personification of “a lost ethic of civic participation.” (p. 296)



REVIEWS

THE BAY BRIDGE

By Paul C. Trimble and John C. Alioto
(Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing,
2005, 128 pp., paper, \$19.19)

REVIEWED BY RICHARD H. DILLON, CO-
AUTHOR OF *HIGH STEEL: BUILDING THE
BRIDGES ACROSS SAN FRANCISCO BAY*

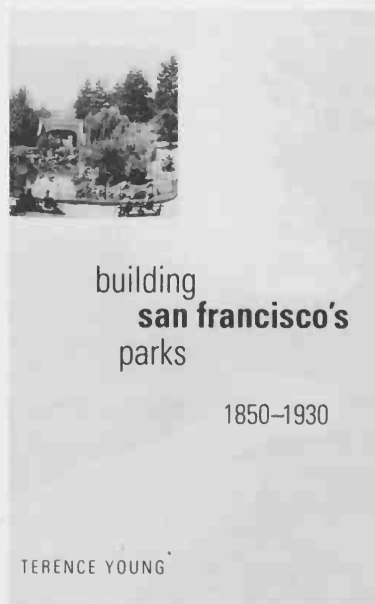
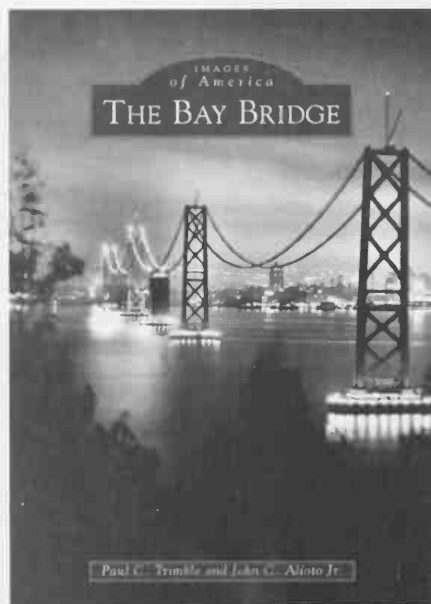
We normally think of the “Images of America” series from Arcadia Publishing as volumes offering us brief, pictorial, local histories of cities in the United States and especially its towns—Sausalito, Cupertino, Mill Valley, and so on. But the series also celebrates urban neighborhoods and even, as in this case, “transcendental” regional structures.

Unlike this reviewer, the co-authors have no trouble describing the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge as

“the grandest bridge in the world.” Grand it is: enormous, in fact, an 8.4-mile combination of structures. It is not only big, but complicated; the stringing together of not one, but two suspension spans over the West Bay, connected in very deep water by a man-made concrete island, the pier once called Moran’s Island for the man who planned it. All this before reaching Yerba Buena Island. There it absorbed the world’s largest tunnel through old Goat Island before continuing as a less-lovely cantilever span and ending, anti-climactically, in a long, ho-hum tress bridge across the Oakland mud flats. So it is really four bridges in one, plus a bore.

In terms of sheer beauty, as opposed to engineering values, the Bay Bridge is no match for its neighbor and rival, the Golden Gate Bridge. Some of the latter’s beauty comes from its sunset setting, of course—the dramatic headlands where a historic strait joins the broad Pacific with one of the world’s greatest harbors. But the Golden Gate bridge is beautiful in itself, in the simplicity of its clean lines, and is made charming by its art deco touches. It is that rarity, a man-made structure that enhances its natural setting, rather than detracting from it. It is a triumph of aesthetics. It can be seen as a work of architecture, almost of sculpture.

If the Bay Bridge had only one great silver suspension span from the Embarcadero to Yerba Buena Island it



would probably be more of a rival to the Golden Gate span. But it has two, plus a cantilever and truss elements, which makes it visually a bit much and too busy.

But strictly as a feat of engineering, the Bay Bridge is hard to beat, as Trimble and Alioto make clear in this small book. It will not replace larger volumes on the subject but is well worth shelving alongside earlier works. There is almost no text or narrative, just an introduction and two hundred excellent photographs from construction days. They are accompanied—*mirabile visu!*—by adequate captions. The lack of really informative captions in bigger and costlier photo essays on various subjects is virtually endemic.

There is history here—from Emperor Norton I (and last) who foresaw such a bridge—and drama. Of 6,500 workers, twelve men sacrificed their lives and more than one deep-water diver damaged his health. The bridge killed the efficient Key System trains and also the historic and romantic ferryboat fleet. But even construction's waste was put to good use here. Enough soil was excavated for the Goat Island tunnel to create Treasure Island, home for the wonderful world's fair, the Golden Gate International Exposition of 1939–40. The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, along with the Golden Gate Bridge and the exposition, were inspiring projects to have been made at any time. But in the depths of the Depression, they must have seemed magical.

BUILDING SAN FRANCISCO'S PARKS, 1850–1930

By Terence Young (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 2004, 260 pp., cloth, \$45)

REVIEWED BY JOSEPH H. ENGBECK, JR.,
AUTHOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORIAN

Terence Young has given us an informative, reliable, and workmanlike portrait of the movement to create Golden Gate Park and some of the smaller parks that grace the hills and valley of our cool gray city by the bay. And he puts his story firmly in context as part of the national movement to create public parks in American cities between 1850 and 1930.

As Young points out, the public park idea was part of a basic reform movement designed to overcome the fact that urban life, with all its advantages, is hard on people—that sprawling, densely populated cities deprive people of opportunities to relax and enjoy direct contact with nature in ways that our ancestors routinely enjoyed and took for granted.

It is humbling to be reminded that most of the pro-park arguments we are apt to think of as modern have actually been around for a century or more. In fact, Young effectively documents the fact that during the 1860s, Frederick Law Olmsted and others were making the case for urban parks as well or better than anyone does today. Indeed, as Young makes clear, Olmsted's thinking strongly influenced early park advocates in San Francisco.

The City of San Francisco commissioned Olmsted to develop a citywide plan for parks in 1865. His site-selection recommendations were ignored for political and economic reasons, but park advocates continued to ask his advice about how to develop the two-thousand-acre “wasteland” of sand dunes they chose as the site for a great central park—the kind of park they believed was needed if San Francisco was ever to “join the ranks for the world's great cities.”

The young man who was hired to survey the site, William Hammond Hall, had long been interested in parks and, though he had no formal training in park planning and development, he eagerly read the books and other materials that Olmsted recommended to him. Moreover, as he told Olmsted in 1871, he had already “visited and carefully studied and noted the principal parks and grounds about London, Paris, and in the United States;” particularly have I roamed through your Central Park and the Fairmount [Philadelphia] and the Brooklyn and Druid Hill [Baltimore] to say nothing of those beautiful spots on the Hudson with which that gentleman of great taste, Mr. [Alexander] Downing, and yourself too I am told, had so much to do.”

Young documents the close intellectual connection between Olmsted and Hall partly to make the case that early development of Golden Gate Park was carried out in what he calls the “romantic” style of park development—a style that made use of naturalistic plantings, curvilinear roads

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and pathways, rustic architecture, and a minimum of developed recreational facilities and other structures.

Later, of course, as the city grew and as transportation improvements made the park more accessible to more people, there was increased pressure for more intensive development, including more playing fields for athletic activities and other forms of what Young calls "active recreation." Young refers to this activity-oriented and often more formal style of park development as "rationalistic." But these terms—"romantic" versus "rationalistic" and "active" versus "passive" recreation—do little to clarify the distinctions they are meant to identify. In this book such terminology seems arbitrary and unnecessary—more appropriate to a Ph.D. thesis, which is, in fact, how this book was born. In a book this carefully researched, on a subject so close to general human experience, a broader philosophical perspective, presented without a stultifying academic overlay, would have been both more appropriate and more enjoyable.

Still, *Building San Francisco's Parks* is a valuable addition to the literature about California, San Francisco, and the American park movement. And Young's review of the transition from such private recreational facilities as Woodward's Garden to the development of San Francisco's public parks makes that story more accessible than it has been.

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS, AFRICAN AMERICANS, AND RACIAL ANXIETY IN THE UNITED STATES, 1848–82

By Najia Aarim-Heriot (University of Illinois Press, Champaign, 2003, 291 pp., cloth, \$39.95).

REVIEWED BY S. F. CHUNG, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

What factors led to the passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act? Najia Aarim-Heriot's thought-provoking, well-argued study focuses upon American racial attitudes and practices, influenced by other aspects such as the driving force in the discriminatory federal legislation against the Chinese. By studying national newspapers and magazines, court cases, political parties, and congressional debates, she examines changing political attitudes regarding immigration in general, labor unions, class, nativism, and the fear of Chinese immigrants as potential citizens and voters. More importantly, she links nineteenth-century questions of African American slavery, civil rights, and labor issues with the plight of the Chinese immigrants. An understanding of the national scene is directly linked to developments in California. "In the minds of California legislators . . . the Chinese and Negro questions were closely connected." (p. 39)

The "Chinese problem" was not simply a "western" controversy but a national one that had its origins in debates over what constituted the American (white) identity. Restrictions placed on African Americans con-

cerning/relating to immigration, testimony rights, education, and miscegenation were extended to the Chinese through the early 1860s. With the end of the Civil War, congressional leaders had to deal with questions of race, especially during the debates over the Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments. Racial animosity toward all non-whites, especially toward the Chinese, who had grown in number in California and other western states by 1870, emerged as a dominant theme. Citizenship and suffrage granted to African Americans were denied to the Chinese, marking the emergence of non-white racial double standards. This paved the way for the reconsideration of the status of African Americans and the "Asianization" of the "Negro question." (p. 155)

The anti-Chinese movement intensified between 1874 and 1880. Although the Workingmen's Party of California and other anti-Chinese organizations multiplied in number and influence, racial prejudice, not economics, was the driving force for/behind hostility. Political and community leaders felt that non-whites could not meld into the American social fabric. During this period former supporters of the "Chinese question" changed sides and favored anti-Chinese legislation. The Chinese were considered objectionable because they could not assimilate, were heathens, and had many undesirable physical and cultural traits. There was a fear among political leaders that if the Chinese gained political power, they might influence American politics adversely. Government leaders believed that

it was “neither possible nor desirable” for the white and Chinese “to live under the same government.” (p. 197) Congressional debates between 1879 and 1882 led to passage of the first of several Chinese exclusion acts and other restrictive measures that made the Chinese very vulnerable to numerous injustices.

This is a very important study with very few weaknesses. Although the author mentions the plight of Native Americans along with Chinese and African Americans, she does not develop this other important factor of racism. Her discussion of Chinese women would have been improved with the inclusion of information from Judy Yung, Huping Ling, and others. There are few errors, but the most glaring is the statement, “The Chinese did not experience the most extreme outrages perpetrated on south-

ern blacks—such as fraud, extreme violence, and murder.” (p. 82) She makes some excellent points, especially in showing how many politicians and newspaper editors switched from supporting the Chinese to opposing them. She raises some thought-provoking issues, including the continuation of stereotypes and misconceptions. Thus editor William Burwell’s fear of the “Mongolising of the Americans” in 1869 reminds one of the 1986 educational film, “Asianization of America.”

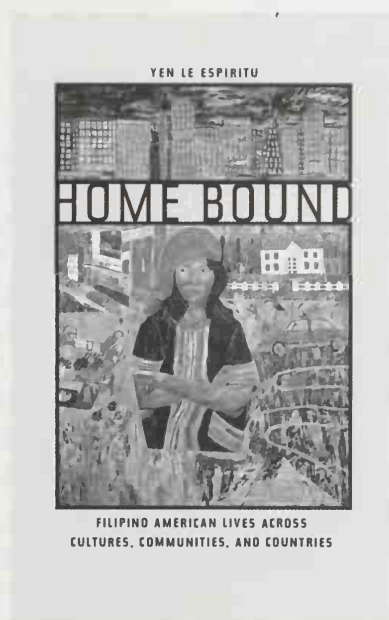
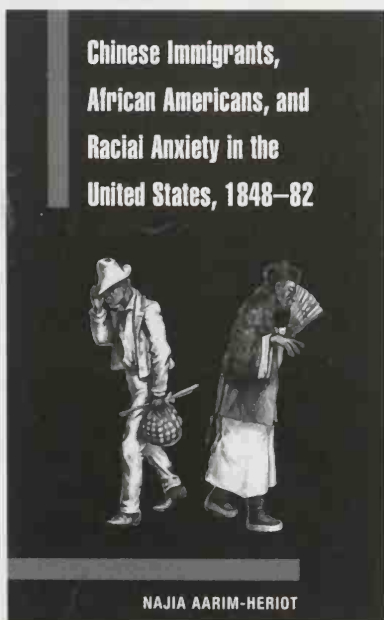
I highly recommend this book to historians, political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists. With recent conferences at Cornell and Boston University on the intersections of Asians and blacks, we might see more studies along this line giving us a fuller understanding of the history of American racism.

HOME BOUND: Filipino American Lives Across Cultures, Communities, and Countries

By Yen Le Espiritu (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003, 271 pp., cloth, \$55, paper, \$24.95)

REVIEWED BY HOWARD A. DEWITT, INSTRUCTOR OF HISTORY, OHLONE COLLEGE, AND AUTHOR OF *VIOLENCE IN THE FIELDS: CALIFORNIA FILIPINO FARM LABOR UNIONIZATION DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND ANTI-FILIPINO MOVEMENTS IN CALIFORNIA*

Yen Le Espiritu’s study of Filipino American lives revolves/develops around the negative impact of the colonialism and economic imperialism of the United States. Exploitation is the key in this well-written and carefully researched monograph that focuses on Filipinos in San Diego. The emphasis is on the Filipino attachment to home-making and the



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problems that Filipino women experience in a white, patriarchal society.

This is a sophisticated, multi-disciplined study of how Asian immigration and the lives of those who arrived in the Golden State were influenced by global economic development. Highly revisionist, with a feminist perspective, this is a thoughtful critique of the Filipino-American experience. Espiritu takes to task immigration historians who have misrepresented Asian immigrants by picturing post-1965 Filipinos as success tales to minimize the importance of race. The author believes that racism is still the determining factor in the Filipino experience.

It is Espiritu's belief that the subtle nature of American economic and cultural domination is the roadblock to equality. To maintain their roots, Filipinos looked to their homeland with a warm nostalgia. In exhaustive detail, the author examines the literature surrounding California Filipinos and concludes that politics and economics continue to be shaped by the other home country, that is, the United States. The power of the state to alter Filipino daily life is the key theme. To delve into this question, Espiritu exhaustively examines the lives of San Diego Filipinos. In interviewing more than one hundred Filipinos, Espiritu wisely splits these questioning sessions between immigrants and American-born

Filipinos, thereby providing a cross-section of views.

Espiritu challenges the notion that Filipinos view America as the promised land. They certainly couldn't have believed this if one considers the wage scale and other conditions of work. The importation of Filipino labor was simply another step in the domination of a colonial populace. California's squalid farm labor camps attest to this conclusion. On the question of U.S. citizenship, Espiritu concludes: "The extension of U.S. citizenship to Filipinos must be understood as a product of the unequal relationship between the dominant white American citizens and the subordinated, colonized, and racialized Filipinos—and not as a fulfillment of the liberal promise of equal access." (p. 69) This ignores the assimilation of many Filipinos and the desire by others to cut their ties with their homeland.

Espiritu concludes with strong evidence that going home often was for "status, revenge and resistance." (p. 86) In San Diego, Navy dominance shaped Filipino lives. To cope with their new lives, Filipinos formed community associations that demonstrated their Americanization while celebrating their roots. As a result, Filipino unity was fragmented by divided loyalties between the homeland and the new American home.

A chapter on the migration of Navy stewards and Filipino nurses bolsters

the author's thesis that U.S. colonialism led to "gendered migration opportunities." (p. 127) In two subsequent chapters, a study of white America and its unyielding opposition to people of color, Espiritu argues that the move to the United States was for the children or for better jobs, but it often didn't work out. This has led to multiple-identification where the children and sometimes their parents were caught between two cultures and didn't fit in either. Espiritu concludes: "They feel strong symbolic loyalty to the Philippines, but they know very little about it." (p. 204)

This is a pioneering study of recent California Filipinos that combines a devastating but always fair critique of past studies with a demand to analyze the urban California Filipino. Heavy emphasis upon interviews, exhaustive bibliographical detail, and the challenging of traditional historiographical notions makes this monograph the next step in understanding the Filipino experience. As Espiritu suggests, farm workers, early immigrants, and World War II veterans have had their historiographical day; it is now time to study the recent Filipino experience. The conflict associated with race, gender, and nationality are blended in this fine monograph to suggest a reinterpretation of the Filipino in the Golden State. The importance of home and community is the essential ingredient that this study challenges historians to develop.

KILLING FOR LAND IN EARLY CALIFORNIA: Indian Blood at Round Valley, 1856–1863

By Frank H. Baumgardner III (New York: Algora Publishing: 2005, 284 pp., \$29.95 cloth, \$22.95 paper)

REVIEWED BY WILLIAM J. BAUER, JR., ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

It is one of California's tragic and dirty little secrets. In the wake of the Gold Rush, Californians launched campaigns against the state's indigenous inhabitants in order to remove them from mining districts and other areas of white settlement. These efforts, as well as the reduction of food sources, new diseases and homicides, led to decline of the California Indian population from 150,000 in 1848 to only 30,000 in 1860. Frank Baumgardner examines some of the activities of white vigilantes in the area surrounding northern California's Round Valley Reservation that contributed to this disastrous population decline.

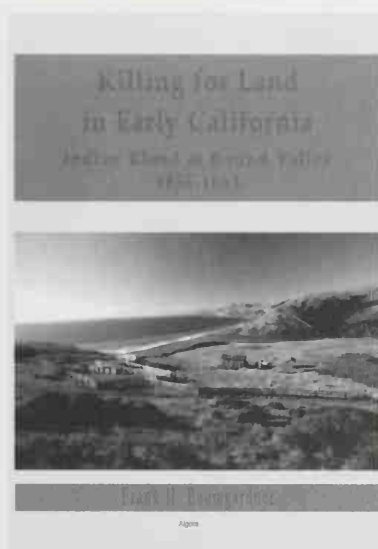
Between 1856 and 1863, whites formed state-sanctioned and illegitimate vigilante organizations to chastise Indians. Whites exaggerated the dangers that Indians posed to livestock and their lives to convince the state governor to authorize a short-lived organization called the Eel River Rangers, commanded by Walter Jarboe.

During the fall and winter of 1859, the Rangers roamed the mountains and rivers surrounding Round Valley

killing and capturing Indians they suspected of killing livestock. The small contingent of U.S. soldiers stationed at Round Valley were unable to stop the massacres and actually engendered the resentment of the ranchers, who expected the military to protect their property and punish Indians. The activities of the vigilante units prompted the California legislature to investigate conditions in Round Valley. For Baumgardner this was a watershed moment, a time when some members of the California legislature offered a more humane solution to Indian problems. The so-called Majority Report called for expanding the size of the Round Valley Reservation and buying out the white landowners who had squatted on land adjacent to the reservation. However, the California legislature ignored these recommendations. Even after the governor disbanded the Eel River Rangers, whites took the law in their

own hands and killed California Indians whenever a perceived threat appeared. During the Civil War, there were several Indian massacres, which Baumgardner gives short shrift. Again, the military was ineffectual and did little to protect Indians.

From the cover (which features a picture of a ranch on the California coast, nowhere near Round Valley) to the end, Baumgardner's text is underdeveloped and unoriginal. At the beginning, Baumgardner refers to California Indians as "simple aboriginal peoples," a statement reminiscent of the time when many people considered American Indians "noble savages." (p. 7) But most troublesome is the lack of any discussion of Indian agency in northern California. Many authors have examined the campaigns against Indians in northern California and in Round Valley, but Baumgardner adds very little to these discus-



REVIEWS

sions. Other California Indian historians, such as Albert Hurtado, James Rawls, Edward Castillo, James Sandos, Robert Jackson, and Steven Hackel, have examined how Indians were historical actors, rather than simply passive and helpless victims of white aggression.

Baumgardner makes few efforts to truly analyze California Indian actions and reactions to the Eel River Rangers and other settler groups. Instead, California Indians appear as passive victims to white aggression. Seemingly, California Indians neither think nor act for themselves and they make no impact on the events in northern California. There continues to be a need for studies that examine how California Indians survived these events and formed viable and important communities in the twentieth century. This book does not offer it.

PRESERVING THE LIVING PAST: John C. Merriam's Legacy in the State and National Parks

By Stephen R. Mark (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005, 204 pp., cloth, \$39.95)

CROW'S RANGE: An Environmental History of the Sierra Nevada

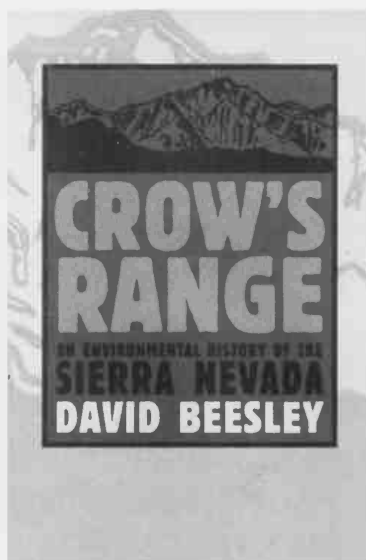
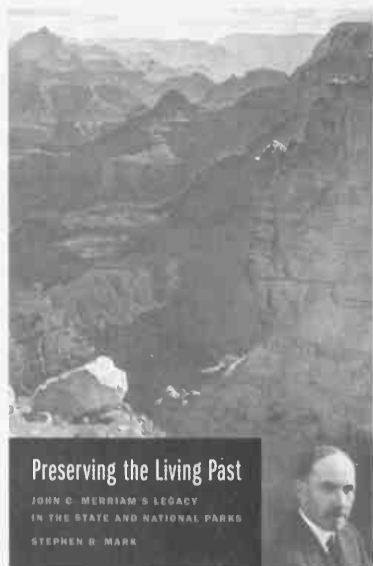
By David Beesley (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2004, 390 pp., cloth \$39.95)

REVIEWED BY PATRICIA ANN OWENS, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, WABASH VALLEY COLLEGE, MT. CARMEL, ILLINOIS

John Muir called the Sierra Nevada mountain chain, the "Range of Light." John C. Merriam believed that such beautiful, magnificent, natural features could inspire and educate peo-

ple, achieving another form of "light." These volumes, well-written and extensively researched, offer fascinating insight into complimentary subjects: the life of John C. Merriam and an environmental history of the Sierra Nevada—a conservationist and the subject to be conserved.

Merriam was born in Iowa on October 20, 1869. As a child he was an avid reader and developed strong self-discipline, two attributes that helped him attain a Ph.D. in 1893. Trained as a paleontologist, Merriam took employment with the University of California in the spring of 1894. For the remainder of his life he would be associated with California and the Far West. He played a key role in the preservation of the state's redwoods, was a co-founder of the Save-the-Redwoods League, and advocated the idea of "interpretation." Merriam believed that national parks and natural areas should be preserved not only for their physical beauty and recreational opportunities but also because they were sources of inspiration for visitors. Parks should be managed "as a kind of open-air university." (p. 11) Stephen Mark, historian with the National Park Service and adjunct professor at the Oregon Institute of Technology, presents a concise biography of Merriam with its emphasis on his lasting contribution to the national park ideal. A few years after Merriam's death, Freeman Tilden authored *Interpreting Our Heritage* and codified many of the principles first advanced by Merriam.



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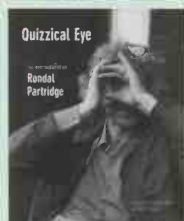
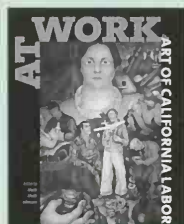
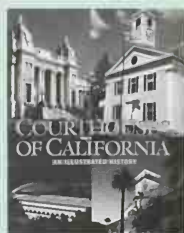
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Beesley, professor emeritus of history at Sierra College in Rocklin, California, presents a history of human interaction with the Sierra Nevada. He admits, "My approach to the writing of this book is that of a teacher." (p. xv)

Thus the volume is organized chronologically and written in a manner to appeal to the general public. The introduction examines the major forces that have shaped the Sierra Nevada and the subsequent seven chapters canvass human interaction with the mountain region. Native Americans, gold miners, conservationists, politicians, farmers, and environmentalists have played a role in the history of the Sierra Nevada and have impacted the geology of the region. This is the story proffered in this volume. The Sierra Nevada is an awesome natural area that has witnessed many a conflict over its land use policies. Today the area is in the headlines as Americans once again decide and debate the fate of Hetch Hetchy—should the dam be removed? Beesley concludes his history of the region, "It pleases me to think that my grandchildren and their children could someday walk on a Hetch Hetchy Valley floor pathway, reading signs that "interpret" the recovery project, as they gaze at waterfalls above them." (p. 272) I think John C. Merriam would be pleased too.

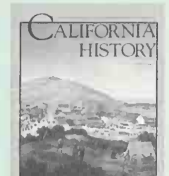
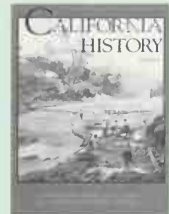
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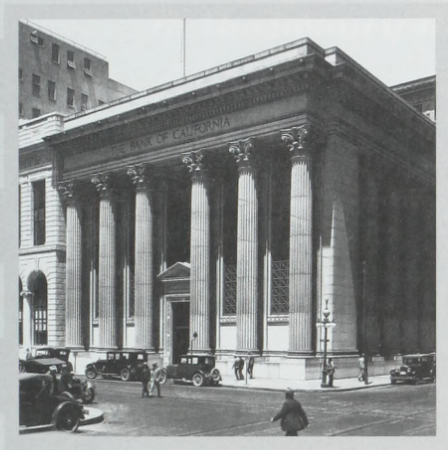
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SPOTLIGHT

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Steeped in the surrealist movement, Hollywood glamour, and industrial photography, Will Connell (1898–1961) passed along his irreverent sensibility and strong technical skills to his students at Art Center, then located in Los Angeles.

*Disenchanted by the Hollywood star machine, Connell had published *In Pictures* in 1937, his grotesque photomontages sat-*

irizing the film industry's glossy veneer. In this later photograph, imagery has mellowed. Connell places a lovely model in the beautiful desolation of Red Rock Canyon in the Mojave, her pose gently mocking the fashion industry or the kind of photographs he took for organizations such as the All-Year Round Club.

ART CENTER STUDENTS PHOTOGRAPHING MODEL
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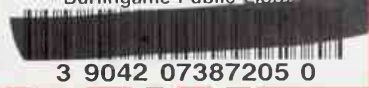
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Pedro Infante (1917–1957), along with Cantinflas, was one of the most popular Mexican singers and movie stars at home and in California. Not only did he appear on the silver screen at theaters patronized by Mexican Americans, but he also made live appearances at theaters. *Dicen que soy mujeriego* ("They Say I'm a Ladies' Man," 1949) also featured Sara García, known as the "la abuelita de cinema nacional" or the grandmother of the Mexican cinema.

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ON THE COVER:

From the earliest days of the movie business, Mexican singers such as José Mojica, shown here as Nicias in Massenet’s *Thaïs* (Chicago Opera, 1920s), began careers in Hollywood that translated to success in the United States, at home in Mexico, and throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

WISCONSIN CENTER FOR FILM AND THEATER RESEARCH

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A quarterly journal published by CHS since 1922, *California History* features articles by leading scholars and writers focusing on the heritage of California and the West from pre-Columbian to modern times. Illustrated articles, pictorial essays, and book reviews examine the ongoing dialogue between the past and the present. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.

FROM THE EDITOR

"DEAR TO ME"

Taking a glance at the Contents of this issue, it looks as if we concocted a combo of essays related to California's musical pedigree. Titles include "Mexican Musicians," "Woody Guthrie," and "Comic Operas," but looks deceive. Our lead article includes the sound of music; it profiles red-hot international stars from Mexico who performed in California. The piece about "Woody Sez," deals with Guthrie's very political Los Angeles newspaper column, and an essay concerning Mexican California revises understanding of maneuver warfare, previously interpreted as comic opera-like sword rattling.

Still, these musical titles cocked my ear and set me on a quest for our state song. Employing a highly unscientific survey, the results showed that practically no one has a clue about California's official state song. All that will change for you in the next five minutes.

Everyone I asked took the same good (but wrong) guess: "California, Here I Come." It's no wonder, so pervasive is it in the popular culture and so familiar—especially the phrase "Open up that Golden Gate." The show tune was written by Bud De Sylva and Joseph Meyer. Al Jolson is famous for many songs: he introduced this one in 1924 on stage in "Bombo," performed for huge crowds in Los Angeles, and later in the movie *Rose of Washington Square* (1939). His 1946 Decca single sold one million copies, but the song's prominence today must be due more to covers by many artists and many film soundtracks such as an array including Bugs Bunny cartoons, *A Star is Born*, *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* and recently, *The Saddest Music in the World* (2003).

Right, but what is the state song? It is "I Love You, California" (and who doesn't?), and it was published in 1913 with lyrics by L. A. merchant Francis Bernard Silverwood and music by A. F. Frankenstein. Opera star Mary Garden introduced the song that year, sheet music was published, and recordings were made. Thanks to the marvelous Cylinder Preservation and Digitization Project at the University of California, Santa Barbara, you can easily listen to the 1913 Edison Blue Amberol cylinder recording made by the Knickerbocker Quartet and featuring mezzo soprano Elizabeth Spencer. Just click on <http://cylinders.library.ucsb.edu> and type the song title in the keyword search box. Clear and romantic sounds float out of your computer, but they are something other than pure pleasure with antiquated pronunciation, and sloppy sentiment. Is this the California we know and love today?

Unfortunately, the fourth stanza is not on this recording, or another version of it available on Project Gutenberg at www.Gutenberg.org/etext/10414. Too bad, because that's where a rhyme appears that makes the whole silly old-fashioned song worthy of being our state song: dear to me and Yosemite.

Who can argue with a rhyme like that?

Janet R. Fireman, *Editor*

J. S. Holliday, A Remembrance

By Gary F. Kurutz, Curator of Special Collections,
California State Library

In 1972, I attended an evening reception at El Molino Viejo, then the southern California headquarters of the California Historical Society. I shall never forget that evening as I was drawn by the presence of one man, J. S. Holliday, the executive director of the California Historical Society. Without even hearing him speak, I found that he had a charisma that I have never before experienced. I now knew what it was like to be in the presence of a celebrity; but in this case, the celebrity was not a rock star or a politician, but a historian! When Dr. Holliday started to speak in that ancient adobe, all were captivated not only by his words but also by the dynamism of his presentation, his powerfully infectious enthusiasm. Ever since, I have admired and respected this most extraordinary of all California historians. With his passing in late August, obituaries have appeared in the newspapers and doubtless others will be published extolling his life and career. Consequently, the following is not a recital of a great man's achievements but rather a personal remembrance.

Two years after that reception at El Molino Viejo, Jim Holliday honored me by hiring me as his library director. Prior to accepting his offer, I had gotten to know more about this remarkable force through the exhibitions and publications of the historical society. At the time, I worked for the Huntington Library in San Marino, and Jim would occasionally stop by to see scholars concerning publications and other projects. These visits were memorable for another reason. Jim, as we all know had an amazing physicality about him. When greeted by him, he shook hands but hugged, squeezed, and sometimes planted a kiss on you regardless of gender, and shouting your name he would ask, "how are you?" He expressed such unbelievable enthusiasm and commitment to California history that anyone in his presence could not help but be inspired.



J. S. Holliday (1924–2006)
CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY (DETAIL)

Jim had that remarkable ability to bridge two worlds. Through his upbringing and education at Yale, he rubbed shoulders with some of the greatest bookmen this country has ever produced. His father, William J. Holliday, ranked as one of the foremost collectors of Western Americana. The senior Holliday introduced Jim to such now legendary figures in the book world as Edward Eberstadt, Everett D. Graff, Thomas W. Streeter, Randolph Adams, and Henry R. Wagner. It was Eberstadt who introduced Jim to the Gold Rush and placed in his hands the worn, leather-bound forty-niner diary of William Swain. The great Chicago bookseller forever changed his life.

In San Francisco, Jim befriended that lion of the book world, Warren Howell. While Jim thoroughly enjoyed these patrician circles of three-piece suits and fine cigars, he was just as comfortable interacting with young, radical writers, photographers, and artists. He felt energized

(Continued on page 80)

COLLECTIONS



CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
EPHEMERA COLLECTION

Pretty Pasters

These printed stickers from popular California roller rinks of the 1940s and 1950s are an unusual recent acquisition by the Research Collections of the California Historical Society from the National Museum of Roller Skating in Lincoln, Nebraska.

During the "Golden Age" of roller skating in the United States, from roughly 1937 to 1959, many roller rinks advertised through the unique invention of the roller

skating sticker. Available for free at the ticket booth, snack shop, rental counter and skate shop of most roller rinks, the stickers were originally placed on roller skate cases. The stickers were an immediate success and became so popular that they were soon traded and collected by skaters across America.

Called "pasters" by collectors, stickers varied in value depending on such distinctions as number of colors, unusual

die-cuts, and the location of the rink itself. Collecting of stickers was so popular that the Universal Roller Skating Sticker Exchange (URSSE) was founded in 1948. Conventions were held at different rinks in the United States every year where collectors traded and sold prized stickers. Between 1948 and 1980, URSSE membership grew to four thousand members in the United States, and the stickers were produced well into the 1970s.



Materials such as these stickers are called "ephemera" by archivists. These materials provide a rich and captivating view into the minutiae of time and place, giving context and detail to the past. It is only in recent years that ephemera collections have been recognized as legitimate resources for studies of the past. In addition to complementing manuscript and printed resources for research, in some instances these materials may be the only source of much-needed information.

The CHS collection is filled with beautifully designed bookplates; promotional flyers and publications from all fifty-eight counties; programs promoting festivals, fairs, and performing arts events; fruit, wine, and vegetable labels; and countless billheads and trade cards, certificates and licenses, as well as handouts, bumper stickers, and diplomas. These materials and others like them scattered throughout the library's manuscript collection are windows to the past. How they can

be used for historical research is open to the imagination, but it is clear that printed ephemera have a legitimate and important place in historical inquiry.

The society's ephemera collections are available for researchers to use in the North Baker Research Library at the headquarters in San Francisco. For current library reading room hours, check the CHS website:
www.californiahistoricalsociety.org.

Mexican Musicians in California and the United States, 1910–50

BY JOHN KOEGEL

Mexican musicians have continuously crossed the United States-Mexico international border in both directions in search of professional opportunities. The period from the time of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 to approximately the middle of the twentieth century is especially important since it represents the time when Mexican (and Latin American) popular and art music came to prominent national attention throughout the United States, within and outside Spanish-speaking communities. The Mexican musicians profiled here, as well as countless others, have transmitted musical styles and repertoires that have enriched musical life in both countries and have crossed the boundaries between the many manifestations of musical culture and mass media in the twentieth century: film, radio, television, recordings, musical theater, opera, concerts, and print media. They have also moved between a “mainstream” English-speaking context and local Latino society in California and the Southwest, New York, Chicago, and, more recently, in Mexican and Latino diasporas throughout the United States. While most of these musicians have been male, a significant number of women musicians have made important contributions to musical life on both sides of the border, especially in the popular music world.¹

Significant work has been produced by a number of scholars concerned with popular music, recordings, popular culture, and cinema that is crucial to an in-depth understanding of the role of Mexican and Mexican American musicians in the United States.² Additionally, the outstanding and absolutely essential Frontera Collection of Mexi-

can American Music (UCLA, Arhoolie and Los Tigres del Norte Foundations) makes available on the internet thousands of recordings of Mexican and Mexican American popular music, principally from the pre-World War II period, including recordings by some of the performers studied in this article.³

In recent years, significant interest has been aroused in the contributions of Latino performers in Hollywood, especially with the release of films such as the HBO/Cinemax documentary *The Bronze Screen*.⁴ And the creative work of Latino writers is being studied as part of Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage Project (University of Houston).⁵

Because of the dispersed nature of the historical record, perhaps, and understandable nationalist sentiment, Mexican writers most often focus on the work of Mexican popular musical performers within Mexico and Latin America, and, to a lesser extent, on their activities in the United States. Chicano scholars naturally concentrate on the creation and reception of a distinctly Chicano or Latino popular culture in the context of Latino communities in the United States, along with their interest in and connections to Latin America. However, the extensive careers of the leading Mexican popular musicians in the United States—and especially in California—from the Mexican Revolution to the immediate post-World War II era have received much less attention in the scholarly literature, though the careers of important Mexican art music composers such as Manuel M. Ponce, Carlos Chávez, and Silvestre



During the 1930s, Hollywood produced movies in Spanish for U.S. Latino, Latin American, and Spanish audiences. Mexican opera singer José Mojica was one of the first singers to succeed in this cine hispano. Like some other Mexican singers who had Hollywood careers, Mojica sang in operatic as well as popular styles.

La cruz y la espada (The Cross and the Sword, 1934), produced by Fox Studio, features Mojica playing a young Franciscan tempted by a spirited young woman in early California. Said the New York Times in a 1934 review: "Even those not familiar with the language of Cervantes can enjoy the numerous songs of all types in which Señor Mojica displays his virtuosity, and follow the romantic story in a general way."

COLLECTION OF JOHN KOEGEL

ROMANTIC
ADVENTURE
BLENDED WITH
GLORIOUS
SONG.....!★



**TITO
GUIZAR**
IN
*"The
LLANO
KID"*



Like Mojica, singer and actor Tito Guízar (Federico Arturo Guízar Tolentino) had a long and multifaceted career in Mexico, Hollywood, and Latin America. Also like Mojica, he was a formally trained tenor, but he was best known as a fine interpreter of canciones rancheras—popular songs with a rural flavor and theme. Guízar is shown here in a Hollywood glamour photograph taken in 1938. He appeared in numerous Hollywood movies, including *The Llano Kid* (1939) and *On the Old Spanish Trail* (1947) with Roy Rogers.

COLLECTION OF JOHN KOEGLER

Revueltas and their connections to musical life in the United States have been extensively studied.

While the contributions of a number of musicians active on both sides of the border are examined here, the life and career of one individual in particular is singled out for closer scrutiny: Mexican operatic tenor, film star, recording artist, and recitalist José Mojica, who personified the urbane, middle- and elite-class musical establishments. Mojica moved easily between both countries, and between Spanish- and English-speaking audiences in California and throughout the United States. He also crossed the borders between high art and popular culture through his recordings of Mexican and Latin American popular songs, recital tours, and work in the early American *cine hispano* (Spanish-language cinema) of the 1930s, the Hollywood studio response to a perceived need for Spanish-language sound films, geared toward U.S. Latino, Latin American, and Spanish audiences. However, unlike other very highly visible Mexican performers active in Hollywood during this period—Ramón Novarro, Dolores del Río, Lupe Vélez—Mojica's career has heretofore not received a critical appraisal.

MEXICAN PERFORMERS IN HOLLYWOOD

In contrast to the Mexican film industry, which generally favored a positive, nationalistic view of Mexico, many U.S. and European films presented racist or stereotypical representations of Mexico and Mexican characters, at least until the 1960s.⁶ As part of Hollywood's foreign appropriation of Mexican (and Latin American) characters and themes during the silent-film period of the 1910s and 1920s and into the sound-film era of the 1930s, most of the major American movie studios promoted Latin American—especially Mexican—actors in order to provide exotic “Latin lovers” for American and international audiences.⁷ The careers of important Mexican musical performers demonstrate how they either advanced or declined in their profession through their contact with the studio system of the 1930s, and how Hollywood used or misused Latin American performers.

Three of the performers discussed here were actors who periodically sang and who had important careers in American silent and early sound films: Ramón Novarro, Lupe Vélez, and Dolores del Río. Tenor Tito Guízar was a popular singer and film actor with operatic training who helped kick off the Mexican musical *comedia ranchera* (singing horseman) film genre with *Allá en el Rancho Grande* (On the Big Ranch) of 1936. The two Mexican opera singers, baritone Rodolfo Hoyos and José Mojica, were active in Spanish-language Hollywood musical films of the early 1930s. Mojica was the most successful of the Latin American singers active in Hollywood's *cine hispano* of the early 1930s.

Significantly, Novarro, Vélez, and del Río started their motion picture careers in silent films, when foreign accents could not be noticed by audiences. Unlike some other foreign silent film stars, all three successfully made the transition to sound films in Hollywood. While primarily actors, they also performed as singers from time to time, particularly Novarro. Guízar had a long but intermittent career as a singer and actor in Hollywood and the United States, though he also enjoyed an extensive career in Mexico; consequently, he appeared to much greater advantage in Mexican films. Novarro, del Río, Vélez, Mojica, and Guízar established significant international careers, especially through their Hollywood film work. Hoyos, though very active in California, New York, and Mexico in opera and in lighter theatrical and musical forms, was less well known in comparison with the others. All of these performers served as role models for Spanish-speaking audiences in the United States, who otherwise saw relatively few individuals with Spanish surnames in positions of national artistic prominence.

Ramón Novarro (José Ramón Samaniegos) (1899–1968) was one of the few Mexican performers to achieve great success as an actor in Hollywood in the 1920s. He was also a fine singer. Novarro moved to southern California from his native Durango with his family during the Mexican Revolution, and started as an extra in such Holly-



wood films as Cecil B. De Mille's 1917 epic *Joan the Woman* (with Metropolitan Opera star Geraldine Farrar). By the early 1920s he was appearing in leading roles in such important films as *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1922) and *Scaramouche* (1923). In the later 1920s and into the early 1930s, as one of MGM's biggest stars, he appeared as romantic lead in a series of exotic or historical dramas and contemporary comedies, most notably in *Ben-Hur* (1926), Ernst Lubitsch's silent film version of *The Student Prince* (1927), with Norma Shearer, and *Mata Hari* (1931), with Greta Garbo. During the early days of sound film, Novarro also performed as a singer (and dancer) in three MGM film musicals by the composer-lyricist team of Herbert Stothart and Clifford Grey: *Devil May Care* (1929), *In Gay Madrid* (1930), and the English, Spanish, and French versions of *Call of the Flesh* (1930).⁸

Novarro directed and starred in MGM's Spanish and French versions of *Call of the Flesh*—*Sevilla de mis amores* (Seville of My Loves, also known as *La Sevillana*) and *La Chanteur de Séville* (The Singer from Seville)—at a time when the major studios were producing Spanish, French, Italian, and German versions of their films for the European and Latin American markets. (He also contributed the Spanish lyrics to Herbert Stothart's songs for *Sevilla de mis amores*.) Besides Novarro, who was a truly multilingual actor, performers appearing in foreign-language versions of Hollywood films included, among others, comedians Laurel and Hardy and Buster Keaton, singer and actress Jeanette MacDonald, and actor and singer Maurice Chevalier—interesting companions indeed! This experiment only lasted sporadically through the 1930s, however, and Hollywood films have been dubbed or subtitled for foreign audiences ever since.

Novarro's strong interest in pursuing a singing career in addition to film acting led him to study voice with baritone (later tenor) Louis Graveure (1888–1968) in Los Angeles beginning in the late 1920s. Though he appeared on international recital tours as a vocal soloist, Novarro never achieved his goal of becoming a professional



opera singer; however, he did sing three opera arias in the film *Call of the Flesh*: “Ah! fuyez, douce image” (Ah! Depart, Sweet Vision) from Jules Massenet’s *Manon*, “Una furtiva lagrima” (A Furtive Tear) from Gaetano Donizetti’s *L’Elisir d’amore* (The Elixir of Love), “Questa o quella” (This Girl or That One) from Giuseppe Verdi’s *Rigoletto*.

In the mid 1930s, Novarro appeared again in two other MGM musicals: a film adaptation of Jerome Kern’s modern operetta *The Cat and the Fiddle* (1934), with Jeanette MacDonald, and Sigmund Romberg and Oscar Hammerstein II’s original romantic film operetta *The Night Is Young* (1935), with English singer Evelyn Laye. Novarro’s performance in *The Cat and the Fiddle* is convincing and graceful; he possessed a secure singing technique as well as a well-placed and pleasing lyric tenor voice perfectly suited to operetta. His diction in both speaking and singing parts is charming and very clear. *The Cat and the Fiddle* is his best-known and most successful singing film role.

In the later 1930s, Novarro’s motion picture career faltered, and he never again regained film star status. However, the shrewd investments he made while a top Hollywood actor (he reportedly earned ten thousand dollars a week at the height of his popularity) gave him financial freedom. Still wanting to perform, he later appeared on the stage and in secondary roles in Hollywood films and on television (*Bonanza*, *The Wild Wild West*, *Dr. Kildare*). However, it is the performances of his youth that were the most significant and are the best remembered today. His fine looks, natural acting ability, dashing manner, and pleasing tenor voice made him one of the most popular of all the Latin American performers to appear in Hollywood films of the 1920s and 1930s.⁹

Although Novarro never established a significant career in Mexico, he did appear in a Mexican film version of the story of Juan Diego and the Virgin de Tepeyac, *La virgen que forjó una patria* (The Virgin Who Forged a Nation) of 1942, which featured a film score by the important Mexican



Ramón Novarro (José Ramón Samaniegos) was one of the few Mexican performers to achieve great success as an actor in Hollywood in the 1920s. He was also a fine singer. As one of MGM’s biggest stars, he appeared as romantic lead in a series of silent films and in the early days of sound.

A truly multilingual actor, Novarro directed and starred in MGM’s Spanish and French versions of Call of the Flesh—Sevilla de mis amores (Seville of My Loves, also known as La Sevillana) and La Chanteur de Séville (The Singer of Seville). For a time in the 1930s, Hollywood studios produced Spanish, French, Italian, and German versions of their films for overseas markets. These experiments proved too expensive, and Hollywood films have been dubbed or subtitled for foreign audiences ever since.

Ramón Novarro with guitar, from Sevilla de mis amores (1930)

Sheet Music, “Charming,” from Devil May Care (1929)

Dolores del Río, Ramón Novarro, Conchita Montenegro, unidentified film set, Hollywood, early 1930s

ALL COLLECTION OF JOHN KOEGEL



*Primarily a silent film actor, following the advent of sound Dolores del Río sang in movies from time to time and had a sweet singing voice. Del Río's silent film *Ramona* (1928) inspired this musical tribute, recorded by the star and released by the Victor Company.*

COLLECTION OF JOHN KOEGEL

composer Miguel Bernal Jiménez (1910–1956). Novarro appeared as the humble *indio* Juan Diego, to whom the Virgin Mary appeared on the Hill of Tepeyac.¹⁰

Dolores del Río (1905–1983), reportedly Ramón Novarro's cousin, arrived in Hollywood in 1925 from Mexico and was quickly promoted in films such as *What Price Glory* (1926), *The Loves of Carmen* (1927), and the film version of Helen Hunt Jackson's novel *Ramona* (1928)—the later two presenting her as Spanish and Mexican-Californian characters. Like some other Hollywood stars who were primarily actors, such as Pola Negri, Gloria Swanson, or Joan Crawford, del Río was called upon to sing from time to time, though the studios did not regularly feature her as a singer in her films—unlike Vélez or Novarro. She did have a sweet (but not large) singing voice.¹¹ Del Río was more successful than Novarro or Vélez in the longevity of her career (she appeared in films in the United States and Mexico between 1925 and 1978), the number of her films, as well as the overall quality of her movie performances. Unlike Vélez, she was given the opportunity to take on varied roles and was not strictly typecast. In the

early 1940s, she returned home to Mexico, where she established herself as one of Mexico's most important and beloved dramatic screen actresses, with fine successes like Emilio Fernández's *Flor Silvestre* (Wild Flower) (1943) and *María Candelaria* (1944), among others. She later returned to American films from time to time. The most famous Mexican film actress of her generation, del Río has attracted the attention of many writers and scholars in Mexico and the United States, and a number of biographies and articles have appeared in recent years, including both scholarly and popular approaches to her life and career.¹²

Lupe Vélez (María Guadalupe Vélez de Villalobos) (1908–1944) was known as the “Mexican Spitfire” because of her fiery on- and off-screen personality (she also appeared in a series of films of the same name). After a convent school education, Vélez performed as a singer and dancer in erotic musical revues in Mexico City, for which she attracted public adulation and notoriety.¹³ Indeed, she was an important protagonist in the *teatro frívolo* (popular light, satirical musical theater) that flourished especially in the 1910s and 1920s during and after the Mexican Revolution. Arriving in Hollywood in the mid-1920s, she first appeared in films in 1927—*Sailors Beware* and a leading role in *The Gaucho* with matinee idol Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. Vélez went on to an important Hollywood film career, and later also worked in the British and Mexican cinema. She also briefly acted in Hollywood's cine hispano in the early 1930s. Though most of her motion picture career was spent in Hollywood, her film work was reported in the leading Mexican newspapers and in such Spanish-language film magazines as *Cine Mundial* and *Cinelandia*, published respectively in New York and Hollywood. The Mexican public avidly followed her American career, as, for example, in 1927 when the major Mexico City newspaper *Excelsior* commented on her ascent to Hollywood fame after the premiere of *The Gaucho*.

Still in June of this year [1927] [Lupe Vélez] was happy to earn the applause of the crowds that attended the tandas [variety shows] of the lyric theater, in the Aztec

capital . . . Anyone would say, when evaluating her rapid ascent, that the joke only requires one to get a ticket to Hollywood, appear before the camera, and triumph. But those of us who know what actually is involved with the struggles in the studios, we must confess that a triumph like the one the young Lupe has enjoyed is unique in the history of the art.¹⁴

After the advent of sound film in the late 1920s, Vélez sang periodically in a number of her Hollywood motion pictures—as she had done earlier in the teatro frívolo in Mexico City.¹⁵ She was a talented singer whose voice was particularly suited for the popular repertory that she sang in English and Spanish. Probably more than many other leading Latin American stars appearing in Hollywood films—with the definite exception of Carmen Miranda—Vélez was typecast in roles that most frequently presented her as an exotic, emotional, and fiery, but also humorous “Latin.”¹⁶ Her passionate on-screen personality was echoed in her tempestuous private life and torrid love affairs with Hollywood figures such as actor Gary Cooper and swimmer and actor Johnny Weismuller, whom she later married.¹⁷ Despondent over personal difficulties and sorrows, she committed suicide at age 36. Like Ramón Novarro and Dolores del Río, Lupe Vélez’s life and career have been investigated extensively, though her work in the Mexican musical theater is less known than her Hollywood film career, at least in the United States.

TWO MEXICAN TENORS

Over the years, Mexico has produced a significant number of operatic tenors as well as tenors active in the popular music world who had operatic (or formal) vocal training. Plácido Domingo (of Spanish birth but raised in Mexico), Francisco Araiza, Ramón Vargas, and Rolando Villazón have appeared in the major opera houses and concert halls of the world in the past decades. Mexican tenors of an earlier era such as Pedro Vargas (1904–1989), Juan Arvizu (1900–1985),



*Lupe Vélez (María Guadalupe Vélez de Villalobos) performed as a singer and dancer in musical revues in Mexico City, for which she attracted public adulation and notoriety. She was an important protagonist in the teatro frívolo (popular light, satirical musical theater) that flourished especially in the 1910s and 1920s during and after the Mexican Revolution. Vélez went on to an important Hollywood film career, starring, for example, in *The Gaucho* with Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. (1927). She later also worked in the British and Mexican cinema. She was a talented singer whose voice was particularly suited for the popular repertory that she sang in English and Spanish.*

Mario Talavera (1885–1960) (also an important popular songwriter), Carlos Mejía (1892–1968), and Alfonso Ortiz Tirado (1896–1960) undertook formal vocal studies and achieved international prominence. They had beautiful, prodigious, and flexible voices, and they focused on careers in popular music (and some in opera). They rose to the top of their profession as a result of their talent, the popular repertory they championed, and their audiences' warm and emotional response to their often operatic-style singing. And, significantly, they all performed regularly in the United States during the height of their careers. This can especially be said of the two Mexican tenors profiled here, José Mojica and Tito Guízar. (Ortiz Tirado very well could be identified as the third Mexican tenor, but since he did not appear in Hollywood films, his important career on American radio in New York in the 1930s is not considered in detail in this study.) Two additional reasons for this examination of the lives and careers of Mojica and Guízar are that they are only briefly mentioned in American scholarship on Latino musical life, and that they serve as representative examples of the careers of a much larger number of performers.

JOSÉ MOJICA

Tenor José Mojica (1896–1974) became an opera singer somewhat by chance and at a relatively early age. The illegitimate son of a woman of some means, he was raised in San Gabriel, Jalisco. Mojica and his mother were forced because of personal tragedy and a reversal in economic fortune to move to Mexico City when he was a teenager. After studies at the Escuela Nacional de Agricultura (National Agricultural School), he entered the Conservatorio Nacional (National Conservatory) and the Academia de Artes Plásticas (Academy of Visual Arts) in 1915. Though he had aspirations to be a painter, he discovered a vocation for opera through exposure to performances given by resident and traveling opera troupes in the capital during the turbulent years of the Revolution. Mojica was a voice student of Maestro José Pierson (1861–1957), who facilitated his entry

into the ranks of the opera world in Mexico City by hiring him to sing with his own *Compañía Impulsora de Ópera*.¹⁸ Pierson also taught and promoted numerous Mexican singers, including the famous tenor and medical doctor Alfonso Ortiz Tirado, “El cantador de América” (The Singer of America);¹⁹ Juan Arvizu, “El tenor de la voz de seda” (The Silken-Voice Tenor); Pedro Vargas, “El tenor de las Américas” (The Tenor of the Americas); and the beloved motion picture star and singer Jorge Negrete (1911–1953), “El charro cantor” (The Singing Charro).

Mojica first sang small operatic roles and then later some leading parts with the *Impulsora* company at different venues in Mexico City, and also for other impresarios at the Teatro Arbeau and for outdoor performances at the Plaza El Toreo (Mexico's City's large bullfight arena in which dance, opera, and musical events were also held). Because of good fortune and his talent, Mojica was engaged in 1919 to sing with the Chicago Opera Company, which performed in the beautiful and capacious Auditorium Theater in the Windy City. In the 1920s, the company was under the directorship of soprano Mary Garden (1874–1967), alongside whom Mojica frequently sang.²⁰ He performed both secondary and principal roles in the French and Italian repertory, and an occasional English- or German-language part.

Mojica was especially noted for his many performances of the role of Pelléas that he sang to Mary Garden's Mélisande in Claude Debussy's important opera *Pelléas et Mélisande*. (Garden was closely associated with the role and had been the first Mélisande at the opera's premiere in Paris in 1902.) Mojica also appeared in several operatic premieres in Chicago, including the role of the Prince in Sergei Prokofiev's modernist opera *Love for Three Oranges* in 1921.²¹ He sang with the Chicago Opera (1919–1930, 1940), San Francisco Opera (1924),²² and Ravinia Opera (1926–1929) (an important summer opera festival held in a park near Chicago), in addition to his numerous Mexican operatic performances.²³

Tenor José Mojica began his career in Mexico City, performing parts such as Canio in Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci* (*The Clowns*). This commemorative poster celebrates the centenary performance of the *Compañía Impulsora de Ópera*, Mexico City, season of 1915–16, at about the time José Mojica began to sing with this company and in this role.

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Evening Post said, "He was at all times a picturesque figure, adolescent, with the halting grace of adolescence, beautifully bewigged and well costumed, acting with ease and considerable personal dignity." Operatic lore has it that he was so gorgeously costumed as Nicias in *Thaïs* that once a couple of infrequent opera-goers were astonished when Mary Garden appeared on the scene. They had assumed that Mojica was the leading lady. [See cover photograph] He had a way of turning small parts into important ones, even quite minor roles like the marriage broker in *Madama Butterfly* and Narraboth [the Captain of the Guard] in *Salome*.²⁵

Claudia Cassidy (1899–1996), a powerful and opinionated music critic who reviewed concert and opera performances in Chicago over a period of many decades, heard Mojica perform with the Chicago Opera on numerous occasions in the 1920s. She praised the Mexican tenor as "that supreme artist in smaller roles" and remembered him as "the most gorgeous young pagan who ever turned monk to devote himself to the poor." Cassidy also recalled Mojica's performances in Russian composer Musorgsky's operatic masterpiece *Boris Godunov* alongside the great Russian bass Feodor Chaliapin: "... though I saw Chaliapin's *Boris* with a superior cast, the man I remember with him is the cringing, mortally dangerous Shuisky, who was José Mojica."²⁶

Mojica's recordings of Italian and French opera arias made in the 1920s reveal a voice that is fresh, flexible, and more than capable of navigating quickly moving melodic passages, as in his performance of "Ecco ridente in cielo" (Behold, Smiling in Heaven) from Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, as well as long, spun-out slower musical phrases, such as in his "Una furtiva lagrima" from Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'amore*.²⁷ Mojica was especially suited to the lyric tenor roles in which he specialized, and while he did not possess an overly large or forceful voice (thus definitely

Mojica also performed with the Chicago Opera on its tours throughout the United States, which included regular appearances in California. In 1924, five years after leaving Mexico for Chicago, Mojica returned briefly to operatic performance in Mexico City, singing the role of the youthful Almaviva in Gioacchino Rossini's great comic bel canto opera *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*), and in several other operas. However, he apparently never returned to the operatic stage in the country of his birth after 1924. His roles, such as Radames in Verdi's *Aida*, Prince Shuysky in Modest Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, and Faust in Charles Gounod's *Faust*, demonstrate his musical and dramatic flexibility.²⁴ Ronald L. Davis, chronicler of opera in Chicago, praised Mojica for his willingness to take on both secondary and principal roles, and signaled Mojica's strong interest in costuming:

A tenor with whom [Mary] Garden was singing frequently those days [the 1920s] was José Mojica, sometimes called "the Rudolph Valentino of opera." Mojica was young, Mexican, strikingly handsome, and the possessor of a unique sense of characterization and costume. Commenting on his performance of Pelléas, the *Chicago*



After performing for the Chicago Opera Company in the Windy City and on West Coast tours, Mojica was signed by Fox Studio in 1929 to appear in Spanish-language musicals produced in Hollywood. Fox and other major studios sought to reach Spanish speakers in cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Antonio, but they were also securing operatic singers under contract for the new era of sound films. Along with *La cruz y la espada*, *El caballero de la noche* (*The Gentleman of the Night*, 1932) and *Love's Frontiers* (*Las fronteras del amor*, 1934) were two of eleven musicals Mojica made with Fox.

José Mojica, herald for El Caballero de la Noche (1932)

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José Mojica as opera singer Miguel Segovia in Las Fronteras de Amor (1934)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

José Mojica as Brother Francisco in La Cruz y la Espada (1934)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



precluding the heavier principal Verdi tenor roles such as Othello in the opera of the same name), his recorded performances stress clear diction, a centered tonal production, careful use of vibrato, and a beautiful shading of the voice at certain key moments. His recordings from the 1920s and 1930s of some of the best Mexican popular songs of those decades show a dramatic approach to the popular repertory, but one that also includes a lighter touch when appropriate. The same fine musical attributes heard in his operatic recordings can also be heard in his evocative and charming recordings of popular songs.

Mojica moved easily between the worlds of opera, recital hall, popular music, and recording and film studio in the United States and Mexico, although he was criticized by some for this versatility. Because of his fine lyric tenor voice, matinee idol looks, and excellent acting ability on stage, he was signed by the Fox Studio in 1929 to appear in a series of Spanish-language musical films in Hollywood during the infancy of the cine hispano. Mojica was contracted by Fox at the time when most of the major studios were beginning to make foreign-language films for outside markets. Fox also secured Mojica's services because of the interest among Hollywood studio moguls at the dawn of the sound film era in hiring operatic singers for their musical films. At the same time that Mojica was working for Fox in the early 1930s, Metropolitan Opera stars Lawrence Tibbett and Grace Moore were appearing in early MGM musicals such as *The New Moon* and *Cuban Love Song*.²⁸ Lily Pons, Gladys Swarthout, Nino Martini, Kirsten Flagstad, Lauritz Melchior, Robert Merrill, and other important Metropolitan Opera singers also made the (usually brief) pilgrimage to Hollywood.

Mojica was the singer who had the greatest success in the early cine hispano, and he made eleven musical films for the Fox Studios: *One Mad Kiss/El precio de un beso*, Spanish and English versions (1930),²⁹ *Cuando el amor rie* (When Love Laughs) (1930),³⁰ *Hay que casar al príncipe* (The Prince Must Marry) (1931),³¹ *La ley del harem* (The

Law of the Harem) (1931),³² *Mi último amor* (My Last Love) (1931),³³ *El caballero de la noche* (The Gentleman of the Night) (1932),³⁴ *El rey de los gitanos* (The King of the Gypsies) (1933),³⁵ *La melodía prohibida* (The Forbidden Melody) (1933),³⁶ *La cruz y la espada* (The Cross and the Sword) (1934),³⁷ *Un capitán de Cosacos* (Captain of the Cossacks) (1934),³⁸ *Las fronteras del amor* (Love's Frontiers) (1934).³⁹ He was most frequently cast as romantic leads—Mexican, Spanish, Russian, English, Gypsy. For a number of his musical films, Mojica, with his piano accompanist and friend Troy Sanders, provided original songs (for *One Mad Kiss*, *Las fronteras del amor*, and other films)—Sanders wrote the music and Mojica the lyrics. (Mojica also wrote the lyrics to popular songs by several of Mexico's most important composers, including "Nocturnal" by José Sabre Marroquín.) And in some of his Spanish-language films and recordings, Mojica performed with Mexican baritone Rodolfo Hoyos. Many of these Fox films were financially successful in Mexico, Latin America, and Spain. They were also shown in theaters in California, New York, and elsewhere in the United States. (Apparently, only a few of Mojica's eleven Fox films survive, including *La Cruz y la Espada* and *One Mad Kiss*.⁴⁰)

In the 1920s and 1930s, Mojica performed extensively as a solo recitalist on the national tour circuit, in California, and abroad. In his recitals he especially favored a mix of Mexican popular songs and arrangements of Mexican folk songs—which he often performed while in Mexican costume—as well as the standard art song repertory, especially French and Italian songs. He also performed selected opera arias from his Chicago Opera repertory in his solo recitals, often to piano instead of orchestral accompaniment. Mojica frequently lent his talents to benefit concerts or other special performances, such as the "Mexican Night" held at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles in June 1931, during which he performed the aria "Spirto gentil" (Fair Spirit) from Donizetti's opera *La favorita* (The Favored One), as well as Mexican songs. Also heard at the Shrine were baritone Rodolfo Hoyos, the orchestral

pieces *Rhapsodia mexicana* (Mexican Rhapsody) and *Crepúsculo otoñal* (Autumn Twilight) by local composers Juan Aguilar⁴¹ and José Perches Enríquez (see below), and works by the major Mexican composer Manuel M. Ponce (1882–1948).⁴² (The Mexican consul also spoke to the large audience.)

After his work in Hollywood films ended in the mid-1930s, Mojica returned to Mexico and built his own estate in the beautiful colonial-era city of San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, which he helped develop into a center for the visual arts. He also appeared in a lavish production of *El capitán aventurero* (The Adventurous Captain) (1939), a film version of the three-act Spanish comic opera *Don Gil de Alcalá* (1932) by the famous Valencian composer Manuel Penella (1880–1939),⁴³ which reportedly had appeared earlier in live performance in Mexico City in the Palacio de Bellas Artes (Palace of Fine Arts)—then, as now, one of Mexico’s principal and most beautiful performance venues.⁴⁴

Reportedly the most expensive Mexican film made up to the time of its release at a cost of six hundred thousand pesos, *El capitán aventurero* failed to recoup its expenses at the box office, even though the film’s producers had felt that the presence of Mojica would guarantee its success.⁴⁵ This story of aristocratic love set in New Spain (colonial Mexico) was directed by Arcady Boytler and had a screenplay by Salvador Novo. Though a number of the original songs by Maestro Penella were used in the film, additional music was also composed and arranged by Eduardo Vigil y Robles (see below) and Manuel Castro Padilla. Film historian Eduardo de la Vega Alfaro cites director Boytler’s astute observations on the differences between Hollywood’s cine hispano and the Mexican cinema at the time of the filming of *El capitán aventurero*.

The Mexican film productions made in Hollywood cannot compete with those that are being made here. In Hollywood they spend a great deal of money, and have the best technical and material ele-

ments at their disposal; but they do not have sufficient collaborators who are adequate for the job. . . . For Hollywood to be able to compete with our productions, it will need a strong nucleus of individuals who are thoroughly familiar with our characters, customs, national psyche, costuming, and other similar factors.⁴⁶

After the release of *El capitán aventurero*, Mojica returned briefly to opera, performing the parts of Narraboth in Richard Strauss’s *Salome* (one of his signature roles) and Fenton in Verdi’s *Falstaff* with the Chicago Opera in 1940. These were probably his last appearances in opera.

Besides his work as an opera singer and film star, Mojica was very active in the recording studio, where he recorded many Mexican and Latin American popular songs of the day for the Edison and Victor (later RCA Victor) companies, as well as a number of opera arias. He was especially known for his promotion of Mexican songwriter María Grever’s (1885–1951) famous song “Júrame” (Swear to Me), the refrain of which is “Júrame/que aunque pase mucho tiempo/pensarás en el momento/en que yo te conocí” (“Swear to me/that even though much time may pass/you will think about the moment/when I first met you.”) Mojica’s records are prized by collectors today, particularly his operatic recordings on Edison “Diamond Discs” as well as the picture disc versions of songs from his Fox film musicals of the 1930s; the latter can sell for more than two thousand dollars each today. (His three RCA Victor picture discs were special promotional versions of recordings from three of his Fox films, with photographs of Mojica embossed on both sides of the shellac discs; these were issued especially for sale in Latin America.) Many of his recordings have been re-released on long-playing album and some on compact disc.⁴⁷

According to the important Mexican cultural historian and writer Carlos Monsiváis, Mojica was homosexual.⁴⁸ Though this statement might be disputed, it may well indeed be true. If this is

the truth, Mojica's personal orientation undoubtedly had an impact on his film and musical career. He was certainly plagued by an inner conflict between the profane and the spiritual, which would later alter the course of his musical career. His autobiography *Yo, Pecador* (also published in English as *I, A Sinner*) verifies this, and explains how he felt torn between his desire for an international career, the temptations of the flesh, and a need for a contemplative life. Mojica also frequently mentioned the close but conflicted relationship he had with his mother in his autobiography. He never married and his mother lived with him periodically during his adulthood, in Mexico, Chicago, and Santa Monica, California. This conflict between the sacred and profane can also be seen to some degree in the ways Mojica was portrayed in the news media and film industry.

In the early 1930s, in order to capitalize on his physical beauty, the publicity department of the Fox Studio arranged for him to be photographed nude, though discretely posed outdoors in a tree (perhaps near his Santa Monica Canyon estate or in the Hollywood Hills), as a publicity photograph for a Spanish-language motion picture fan magazine.⁴⁹ While it was common for Hollywood film studios to capitalize on the physical beauty of its young female actresses, it was also a practice to emphasize male physical attributes in publicity photographs, especially in the freer "pre-Code" period of the early 1930s. George O'Brien, Johnny Weismuller, and Ramón Novarro were portrayed in this manner at that time, as Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., had been earlier.⁵⁰ In the later 1930s, Mojica, along with his friend Salvador Novo (1904–1974), the important, controversial, and well-known Mexican writer, was again photographed nude, in a swimming pool. This photograph was reproduced in the short-lived but influential illustrated Mexican photo journal, *Rotofoto*, "revista supergráfica" (extra-illustrated magazine), and caused a scandal.⁵¹ Novo, an openly gay man, left truly revelatory memoirs, which were only published many years after his death as *La estatua de sal* (The Statue of Salt) because of their very per-



While under contract to Fox, Mojica continued an active recording career, performing popular Mexican and Latin American songs and tunes from his motion pictures. The picture discs of songs—many of which Mojica cowrote—from the Fox musicals have become valuable collectors' items.

"País ideal," from La melodía prohibida (1933, Victor 17-5002)

COURTESY OF KURT NAUCK

sonal and controversial nature.⁵² However, since *La estatua de sal* stops at a point well before the time Novo actually knew Mojica, Novo's very revealing autobiography understandably contains no reference to the Mexican tenor. Though Mojica alludes to the sins of his youth in the title of his own autobiography, *Yo, pecador*, he never reveals the truly intimate details of his life. This was only to be expected of such an autobiography published in 1956 by the then Franciscan friar, which also bore the ecclesiastical mark of approbation of the *Nihil Obstat*.⁵³

By the early 1940s, Mojica had permanently left operatic performance and gradually retired from public performance as a layman. He had begun to turn to the religious life earlier, sometime in the mid 1930s, and had entered the Franciscan Third Order for the laity. After the death of his mother, he decided to study to take the vows of a

Franciscan friar and to prepare for the priesthood. He was ordained in Lima in 1947, and he assumed the religious name of Fray José Francisco de Guadalupe Mojica; he later resided in the Convento de San Francisco in Arequipa, Peru.⁵⁴ After his ordination he returned to regular work in the concert hall, tour circuit, and the radio and recording studios, in addition to appearing in several more films, always in his Franciscan habit, in order to raise funds for his order. But now he sang spiritual songs in Latin and Spanish as well as the beloved Mexican popular songs of the 1920s and 1930s, especially those secular songs without an overtly sensuous or erotic orientation. It was very rare for a member of a Roman Catholic religious order to be permitted to perform professionally around the world as a singer and film actor, but then what other Hollywood film star or opera singer had ever become a Franciscan friar before?

Mojica's 1956 autobiography *Yo, pecador* was quite successful in Mexico, Latin America, and the United States—with a print run of forty-one thousand copies in the first three Spanish editions alone. (Published in Mexico City, it was extensively reprinted.⁵⁵) The royalties provided substantial funds for the Franciscan order. *Yo, pecador* was also made into a well-received motion picture in 1959 in Mexico (Mojica was portrayed by Brazilian actor Pedro Geraldo), and carried his fame and religious convictions throughout Mexico, Spain, and Latin America and to Spanish-language theaters in California and elsewhere in the United States.⁵⁶ When Mojica died in 1974, his funeral attracted the attention of tens of thousands of mourners in Lima, who crowded the streets of the capital city of Peru. Though he was Mexican by virtue of birth, upbringing, and strong personal attachment, he had become an adopted son of Peru decades before his death, hence this outpouring of public affection.

The overall quality, varied nature, and international scope of Mojica's inter-related operatic, recital, radio, recording, and film careers place him among the most important Mexican perfor-

mers of the twentieth century. With his extensive musical activities in California and throughout the United States, he also represented Mexican and European popular and art music to both English- and Spanish-speaking audiences. But the inner conflict he endured while a performer in the secular world may have only been resolved after he entered the religious life. José Mojica continues to be well remembered today in Latin America; his recordings are esteemed many years after his death, and a number of posthumous biographies have appeared.⁵⁷

TITO GUÍZAR

Like Mojica, singer and actor Tito Guízar (Federico Arturo Guízar Tolentino) (1908–1999), “El galán-cantor de Latinoamérica” (The Leading Man/Singer of Latin America), also had a long and multifaceted career in Mexico, California, the United States, and Latin America. He was also born in Mojica's home state of Jalisco, Mexico (in its capital city of Guadalajara).⁵⁸ Also like Mojica, he was a formally trained tenor who studied voice with José Pierson in Mexico City. Guízar also studied voice later with the world-famous Italian operatic tenor Tito Schipa (1888–1965) in New York. (The timbre of Guízar's voice is reminiscent of that of Schipa, his *tocayo*, or namesake.) Though he performed on the major concert stages throughout the Americas, Guízar was best known as a fine interpreter of *canciones rancheras* (popular songs with a rural flavor or theme) and the songs of Mexican popular composers such as María Grever, Ricardo Palmerín, and Agustín Lara.

After vocal study in Italy in the 1920s, a Mexico City debut at the Teatro Politeama (season of 1927–1928), and radio, nightclub, and recording studio work in New York City in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Guízar was first brought to international attention in 1936 when he appeared in Fernando de Fuentes's critically-acclaimed film *Allá en el Rancho Grande* (On the Big Ranch), which was notable also for the well-known title song that he sang in the film. This pioneering Mexican film brought him the international recognition that propelled his career forward. By

1936 Guízar had also made his first appearances in Hollywood films. *Allá en el Rancho Grande* ushered in the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema (circa 1936–1956), and, as a result of his fine acting and singing talents, handsome looks, and his being in just the right place at the right time, Guízar earned an iconic status as one of the models for singing *charro* (horseman) films in the many well-received *comedias rancheras* (rural film comedies usually with numerous songs) of the time. (The immensely popular singing actors Jorge Negrete and Pedro Infante followed Guízar in these roles.⁵⁹) Though Guízar later appeared in many Mexican and Hollywood motion pictures, he is best remembered for this first major film role.

Showing his musical versatility, Guízar performed with popular dance bands and orchestras during the swing era (Xavier Cugat, Guy Lombardo), as well as with light classical “pops” orchestras, and appeared regularly on his own radio shows broadcast from New York in the 1930s. He also made a large number of recordings in Mexico and the United States (especially in New York and Los Angeles), though unfortunately only a small portion of these are readily available on compact disc today.⁶⁰ However, several of his films are available currently on DVD and videotape. Much later in his career Guízar also appeared as an actor on Mexican *telenovelas* (soap operas), performing, for example, as the *abuelito* (grandfather) of the famous Mexican popular singer and actress Thalía in the popular 1994 series *Marimar*.⁶¹

Of the performers active in motion pictures on both sides of the border—Guízar, Novarro, del Río, Vélez, Mojica—Guízar was perhaps less well-served than the others by the Hollywood film industry. In Hollywood films, he was usually cast as secondary leads, given special “Latin” novelty numbers, or was relegated to western dramas such as *The Gay Ranchero* (1948) or *On the Old Spanish Trail* (1947) with singing cowboy Roy Rogers and his famous horse Trigger. Guízar was better served in such well-acted, beautifully



TITO GUÍZAR
ESTHER FERNÁNDEZ

“ALLÁ EN EL RANCHO GRANDE”
UNA EXCLUSIVA DE PELÍCULAS MEXICANAS, S.A.C.V.

COPIA: RENE CARDONA
CARLOS LÓPEZ “CHAFLÁN”
DIRECCIÓN: FERNANDO DE FUENTES

Singer Tito Guízar had a long career in Mexico and the United States. He first gained international notice in Allá en el Rancho Grande (1936, released in the U.S. as On the Big Ranch). This pioneering Mexican film brought him fame in the United States, and in the year after he made his first appearances in Hollywood films. Guízar earned iconic status as one of the models for singing charro films, influential in mainstream Hollywood movies.

*Tito Guízar in Allá en el Rancho Grande (1936)
Lobby card, Sindicato de Telemirones (Mexico, 1954)*

All collection of John Koegel



shot, and evocative Mexican musical films as *Allá en el Rancho Grande*, *Amapola del camino* (Amapola of the Road) (1937), and *Qué lindo es Michoacán* (How Beautiful Is Michoacán!) (1942), in which his relaxed personality, fine acting ability, and charming speaking and singing voice were seen and heard to great advantage.⁶² He possessed a beautiful lyric tenor voice well suited to the lighter nineteenth-century Italian opera arias that he sang on occasion on recital programs in venues such as New York's Carnegie Hall. He was especially noted for his live performances of the many popular songs by Mexico's most important songwriters that he must have sung thousands of times over the decades. However, his greatest, lasting contributions were his film appearances in classic Mexican films of the 1930s and 1940s and the recordings he made on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. These made a significant impact on Spanish-speaking audiences in California's Mexican theaters and homes, especially in Los Angeles.

OTHER MEXICAN MUSICIANS IN THE RECORDING STUDIO AND ON STAGE

A thorough study of the principal Mexican musicians who appeared in California and the United States (not to mention the less nationally prominent performers) during this period is beyond the scope of this essay. Nevertheless, the careers of certain pioneering performers and musicians active in the parallel musical worlds of the recording studio and musical stage reveal common trends that many Mexican musicians experienced in their lives and that still endure today, albeit often in different ways. Some of these musicians were both stage performers (actors and singers) and recording artists, while others (especially instrumentalists, musical arrangers, and composers) functioned primarily off screen, in the recording studio (including the radio broadcast and film soundtrack recording studios), and in live performance. The emphasis here on these parallel worlds of recording studio and musical stage helps us understand the mul-

tiply ways in which musicians of any ethnicity or background functioned in their roles of entertainers and artists, and how audiences received and consumed the products of these artistic endeavors.

Commercial recordings of popular music strongly reflect contemporary trends and fashions in musical repertoires and genres, as well as singing and instrumental performance styles. This is especially true of the Mexican musical scene. Because the recording industry was first established in the United States and Europe and only later spread to Mexico and Latin America, commercial recordings of Mexican popular and classical music were first made in the United States. Firms such as Berliner, Zonophone, Bettini, Edison, and Columbia released recordings of Latin American and Mexican music in the United States as early as the 1890s. Recordings of Mexican musicians apparently were not made in Mexico until 1904, when the American Edison and later the Victor and Columbia companies visited Mexico City on recording expeditions and began to record some of the leading Mexican musicians and ensembles, including male vocal duets (with guitar accompaniment) such as Ábrego y Picazo and Rosales y Robinsón,⁶³ the principal Mexican military bands (Banda de Estado Mayor, Banda de Zapadores), the Orquesta Típica (Mexican Typical Orchestra) of Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, baritone Felipe Llera, the Quinteto Jordá-Rocabruna (the string quintet led by pianist Luis G. Jordá and violinist José Rocabruna), Trío Arriaga (two mandolins and guitar), and guitarist Octaviano Yáñez, among others.⁶⁴ However, the lack of a discography of early Mexican recordings precludes a definitive statement as to the status and complete extent of the very first recordings made in Mexico.

A number of Mexican and Latin American performers active in the overlapping fields of concert music, opera, operetta, zarzuela (Spanish-language musical theater), and popular music recorded for American companies in New York, Los Angeles, San Antonio and in other centers of early recording activity in the United States

from the turn of the twentieth century. For example, the very first Mexican American musician—born and resident in the United States—to make commercial recordings of which I am aware was singer Eugenia Ferrer (also a pianist), who recorded eighteen songs in New York for Emile Berliner (the inventor of the flat disc) in 1898 and 1899.⁶⁵ She was the daughter of the important San Francisco guitarist-composer Manuel Ferrer (originally from San Antonio, Baja California),⁶⁶ some of whose musical repertory she recorded, including the songs “Los lindos ojos” (The Beautiful Eyes) and “El jaleo de Jérez.”⁶⁷ These songs formed part of the large Mexican salon repertory of the late nineteenth century, which falls in between the art music, musical theater, and popular repertories. As with other “ethnic” recordings, Eugenia Ferrer’s eighteen seven-inch Berliner discs were recorded for the local market in the United States as well as for Latin American record buyers.⁶⁸

In comparison to the early recording pioneer Eugenia Ferrer, who was not really well known on a national level in her lifetime, a later recording artist, the Spanish-born singer, actress, and dancer María Conesa (1892?–1978), who made numerous recordings beginning at the turn of the twentieth century, had a very large presence in Mexican popular culture over eight decades (she was a long-time Mexican resident). She also spent a number of years living and working in Los Angeles. Conesa was known as “La gatita blanca” (the Little White Cat), after her first appearance in Mexico City in the popular zarzuela of the same name, in November 1907.⁶⁹ Celebrated for her abilities as a dancer, comedienne, and singer of light music in satirical and political musical revues and zarzuela in Mexico City, Conesa was also notorious for her risqué manner of acting and singing. Mexican poet, writer, and critic Luis G. Urbina (1868–1934) even complained that she could read the *Padre Nuestro* (Our Father) and make it sound salacious.⁷⁰ Despite his disapproval, her many admirers vociferously applauded her performances, some going so far as to pay the fines imposed by



Commercial recordings of Mexican music were first made in the United States at recording studios in New York and Camden, New Jersey, and later in Los Angeles and San Antonio. María Conesa, who made numerous recordings beginning at the turn of the twentieth century, had a very large presence in Mexican and Mexican American popular culture over eight decades. Conesa was known as “la gatita blanca” (the Little White Cat) and visited or lived in Los Angeles off and on during the 1920s and 1930s, where she was active on the Spanish-language theatrical scene.

COLLECTION OF JOHN KOEGEL

theatrical censors for her performance of suggestive material. Indeed, she was censured for obscenity on stage by government authorities on various occasions, including for her performances in *La gatita blanca*. But however prominent Conesa was, she was only one of numerous performers active in the *teatro sicalíptico* (sexually suggestive theater) that flourished in this period. Indeed, Conesa was one of the leading stars of the Mexican musical stage along with performers such as singer Esperanza Iris (1888–1962), “la reina de la operetta” (the Queen of Operetta), who was also the owner of the famous Teatro Iris, one of Mexico City’s principal theaters.⁷¹ (Iris’s performances were never as suggestive as those of Conesa.)

María Conesa also periodically attracted the attention of governmental officials in the 1910s and 1920s because of the political nature of some of the musical revues and other musical theater pieces, including zarzuela, in which she appeared, as well as the controversial nature of some of her admirers or presumed lovers.⁷² Though she vigorously denied any involvement, Conesa was even rumored to have been connected somehow to the infamous deeds perpetrated by the notorious Banda del Automovil Gris (Gang of the Gray Automobile) in 1915. (This was a gang of thieves who robbed the homes of Mexico City’s elites, apparently with secret official complicity, and made their getaway in a gray automobile. Their activities rocked Mexican society and even served later as the basis for several motion pictures.) However, such attention only served to heighten public interest in Conesa’s stage appearances and increase box-office revenue.⁷³ The high level of her salary also attracted the attention of the public, as, for example, when the Mexico City newspaper *El Imparcial* reported on 5 January 1909 that the Alcaraz Company had offered three thousand pesos per month for her services.⁷⁴

While in New York on several occasions between 1907 and 1909, Conesa recorded songs from *La gatita blanca*, as well as couplets (strophic songs) from theatrical works and Mexican zarzuela

songs.⁷⁵ (She also made recordings in Mexico.) In this way her most popular songs were made available to city dwellers as well as to those in the provinces who could not travel to the capital or other cities to see and hear her in person. Later, she returned to New York on several occasions. While in New York in 1917, she took part in an early and unusual attempt at a musical film. George R. Webb, for his Webb Singing Pictures, directed a number of actors and singers, including Conesa and opera singer Giuseppe Campanari, who agreed to be filmed performing Act IV of Georges Bizet’s *Carmen*. (Conesa must have acted the part of the Spanish gypsy Carmen.) Other singers, performing behind a screen, pretended to represent musically the characters appearing on the screen. Besides *Carmen*, Enrico Caruso’s recordings of arias from Verdi’s opera *Rigoletto* and Leoncavallo’s *I Pagliacci* were played while silent films of these scenes made by Webb were shown.⁷⁶ This experiment was short lived and the union of image and sound in filmed opera would only be achieved with the sound-on-disc Vitaphone short films of opera excerpts of the later 1920s.

Besides her extensive work in New York’s Spanish-language theaters, Conesa appeared elsewhere in the United States during her career. In addition to performing in San Antonio and elsewhere in the Southwest, she resided in Los Angeles on several occasions, where she appeared to acclaim in local Spanish-language theaters. As theater historian Nicolás Kanellos documents, Los Angeles had the most active Spanish-language theatrical scene in the United States, and it was only natural that Conesa would be drawn there by its many professional opportunities, especially after she was forced to leave Mexico for a time in the late 1920s.

In addition to her extensive work on musical stages in Mexico, California, and elsewhere in this country, Conesa also appeared in a number of Mexican films later in her career, including *Refugiados en Madrid* (Refugees in Madrid) (1938), *Madre a la fuerza* (Mother by Force) (1939), *La*



Another Mexicana musician who performed in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century was soprano Carmen García Cornejo, who appeared in concerts on both sides of the border. Her recordings, made during the 1910s, represent a core group of Spanish-language songs well known to English-speaking audiences from at least the 1910s through the 1950s.

Ángel Esquivel (1), Alfonso Garvina (2), Carmen García Cornejo (3), Mario Talavera (4), Miguel Lerdo de Tejada (5) From Mario Talavera, Miguel Lerdo de Tejada: Su vida pintoresca y anécdotica (Mexico City: Editorial "Compás," n.d.)

rebelión de los fantasmas (The Rebellion of the Ghosts) (1946), *Una mujer con pasado* (A Woman with a Past) (1948), *Hijos de una mala vida* (Abused Children) (1949), and *Entre tu amor y el cielo* (Between Your Love and Heaven) (1950). During her visit to Los Angeles in 1930 she had hoped to break into Hollywood; however, she never appeared in its cine hispano. In *Refugiados en Madrid*, she demonstrated her insinuating singing and performance style before an admiring audience in this melodrama set in the Mexican embassy in Madrid during the tumultuous days of the Spanish Civil War (the film was released during the height of the war).⁷⁷

Conesa's amazing longevity as a major participant in Mexican popular culture over many decades (stage, screen, recordings, personal appearances) was matched by few other performers.⁷⁸ And in Mexico she is remembered today long after her death. When the world-famous Mexican popular singer-songwriter Juan Gabriel (b. 1950) wrote his song "María de todas las Marías" (Mary Among All the Marys) in honor of Mexican actress María Félix (1914–2002), he referred to

her along with other beloved Marys such as the Virgin Mary, opera singer Maria Callas, songwriter María Grever, and María Conesa, who, in Gabriel's words, was the "*deleite de los caballeros de la época revolucionaria de México a principios del siglo XX*" (the delight of the gentlemen of the revolutionary era in Mexico at the beginning of the twentieth century).⁷⁹

Another Mexicana musician who performed in the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century, but without the same sort of notoriety that María Conesa attracted, was soprano Carmen García Cornejo, who appeared in opera and concerts on both sides of the border.⁸⁰ After performing leading roles in Italian operas such as Donizetti's bel canto masterpiece *Lucia di Lammermoor* (as Lucia) and Verdi's *Rigoletto* (as Gilda) in Mexico in the 1910s, García Cornejo visited New York in 1917, in company with Miguel Lerdo de Tejada (1869–1941), the celebrated leader of the renowned Orquesta Típica, and with tenor Mario Talavera and baritone Ángel Esquivel. In Camden, New Jersey, she recorded for the Victor Company a series of Mexican songs by such important

composers as Manuel M. Ponce and Lerdo de Tejada. These songs, while part of the popular repertory, also crossed the boundaries between art song, popular song, and folk music. Lerdo de Tejada accompanied García Cornejo on the piano on these 1917 recording sessions. They recorded his songs “Sin tí” (Without You), “Asómate a la ventana” (Lean Out the Window), and “Perjura” (Perjurer) (perhaps his best-known piece), as well as Manuel M. Ponce’s beautiful “A la orilla de un palmar” (Beside a Palm Grove) and world-famous “Estrellita” (Little Star).⁸¹ Both “Perjura” and “Estrellita” are well known today in Mexico, the United States, Europe, and Latin America, and have achieved a canonic status in the popular “light classical” repertory. They are also part of a core group of Spanish-language songs well known to English-speaking audiences from at least the 1910s through the 1950s through the filters of concert performances, film, radio, and recordings. They are performed and recorded today by Spanish and Latin American opera singers for their crossover albums (Plácido Domingo, José Carreras). The *canciones románticas* (romantic songs) that García Cornejo performed in public and recorded with Lerdo de Tejada in 1917 are similar in musical style and poetic sentiment to those published in New York in 1919 in the series *Canciones mexicanas* (Colección Carmen García Cornejo).⁸² This collection was an attempt by García Cornejo and her musical arranger Guillermo A. Posadas (the assistant director of Lerdo de Tejada’s Orquesta Típica) to enter the rough-and-tumble music-publishing world of New York’s Tin Pan Alley.⁸³ While its primary intended audience was probably the Spanish-speaking community in the United States, García Cornejo and Posadas may have hoped that their collection *Canciones mexicanas* would also reach the English-language sheet-music buyer.

Like Carmen García Cornejo, who could sing both opera and popular music, but unlike María Conesa, who only sang popular music, Mexican baritone Rodolfo Hoyos (1896–1980) was equally versed in the popular and cultivated styles of

singing and acting. He had a substantial career in opera, zarzuela, films, recordings, live performance, and radio on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. While less well known on an international level than the other performers discussed above, he nevertheless made an important contribution to Mexican culture in the United States, especially in Los Angeles and New York. He also appeared in opera in Mexico City and Guadalajara from the early 1920s, and in opera and on local Spanish-language radio in California from the 1930s. In 1974, Hoyos—who had hosted and performed on radio programs in Los Angeles from 1932 through 1967—was interviewed by a team of researchers (Gutiérrez and Reina Schement) investigating the history of Spanish-language radio in southern California. Hoyos provided important details about radio activities in the 1930s that illuminate the era. Recalling that his early radio programs “were a mixture of live music, poetry, drama and discussion,” he “described his [work with] early programs as a [radio] broker and the subsequent change to recorded programs.” Hoyos remembered that “We would present artists, I would sing and have many artists. There were groups of singers. We would put radio dramas with recognized artists such as [the prominent actor] Romualdo Tirado . . . I began to use records and it became easier for us and less expensive.” Gutiérrez and Reina Schement noted that “in the early days [the 1930s] Hoyos paid the station \$180 a week for a daily show of one hour. He also sold advertising in addition to producing the show.”⁸⁴

Besides his regular work as a radio broadcaster and producer, popular performer, and opera singer, Hoyos performed in zarzuela and operetta companies throughout the United States and Mexico, and headed his own zarzuela troupe for a time. He was also very active in the recording studio, and made recordings for almost all the major American record companies (Columbia, Edison, Victor, Brunswick, Vocalion, Okeh) over several decades, beginning in the late 1910s.⁸⁵ Hoyos was as proficient in singing Mexican *huapangos*

(from the state of Veracruz) and other folk-style musical pieces as he was in performing the current romantic popular songs by important Mexican composers such as María Grever, Mario Talavera, or Jorge del Moral. He would even sing in a crooning style from time to time and could do comic sketches, all in Spanish. Besides his work with popular music, and his appearances in the standard nineteenth-century Italian and French operatic repertory in Mexico and the United States, Hoyos also sang in the 1932 Los Angeles premiere of *David Rizzio*, the opera by California composer Mary Carr Moore (1873–1957) about Mary Queen of Scots.

Billed in supporting roles, Hoyos appeared in Spanish-language Hollywood films: *Carne de cabaret* (Cabaret Flesh—named after the famous Argentine tango of the same title) (1931), *Un capitán de Cosacos* (A Cossack Captain) (1934)—with José Mojica, *Piernas de seda* (Silk Legs) (1935). Hoyos even reportedly appeared as the Count di Luna in sequences from Verdi's opera *Il trovatore* (The Troubador) in the Marx Brothers' madcap MGM classic film comedy *One Night at the Opera* (1935), which may have been cut from some release prints, unfortunately.

Hoyos's career was similar to that of many other Mexican performers of the time in that it involved work in a variety of mediums and styles. Like José Mojica, Hoyos never scorned performing in both the operatic and popular repertory, and, like his compatriots Mojica, Guízar, and Ortiz Tirado, Hoyos made a specialty of Mexican canciones románticas of the 1930s. His son, Rodolfo Hoyos, Jr. (1916–1983), also had a varied career—but as an actor and not a singer—in Hollywood films and television programs from the 1950s until 1982.⁸⁶ Rodolfo Jr. was most frequently typecast and was relegated to playing Mexican or Latin American villains and heroes. (The younger Rodolfo also served as radio announcer for the Los Angeles Dodgers baseball team for many years.)

The music of the beloved Mexican composer and singer-guitarist Guty Cárdenas (Augusto Alejandro

Cárdenas Pinelo) (1905–1932), “el ruiseñor yucateco” (The Yucatecan Nightingale) continues to speak directly to listeners today. Though his career was lamentably short, Cárdenas was truly one of the most important Mexican popular singers and songwriters of the 1920s and early 1930s, and one of the most important songwriters in all of Latin America. Starting his performing career in Mérida, Yucatán, Cárdenas toured throughout Mexico, appearing in villages, towns, and the principal cities. In 1928 he moved to New York, where he made more than two hundred recordings between 1929 and 1931 of Mexican and Latin American songs, including his own compositions and songs by some of Mexico's most important songwriters, including Tata Nacho (his early champion), Ricardo Palmerín (his Yucatecan compatriot and mentor), and Agustín Lara (his friend).⁸⁷ Cárdenas also recorded for various early Mexican record labels, including Peerless, Nacional, and Huichi. In the year before his death he appeared on the important Mexico City radio program *Calendario Artístico* (Artistic Calendar) on the leading Mexican station XEW, “La Voz de la América Latina” (The Voice of Latin America), under music director Guillermo Posadas.⁸⁸

The stylistic range of Cárdenas' recordings is most impressive and was unmatched by most other Mexican popular singers of his or a later day. His repertory included boleros (with Agustín Lara he helped introduce the form to Mexico), Ecuadorian *pasillos*, Colombian *bambucos*, Chilean *cuecas* and *vales* (waltzes), Argentinian tangos and *danzones*, Peruvian *yaravíes*, Mexican *huapangos* and *corridos* (narrative ballads), various other Mexican regional popular and folk songs, and, importantly, the *trova yucateca* from his home state of Yucatán. And he could even sing in Spanish in a crooning style to the latest American-flavored dance band arrangements! He had a marvelous guitar technique and his recordings exhibit a seemingly inexhaustible fountain of innovative and evocative guitar accompaniment patterns. He also appeared in several

films made for the Hollywood cine hispano in the early 1930s, including *La dama atrevida* (The Bold Woman, First National, 1931). And he performed in Los Angeles' Spanish-language theaters in the early 1930s. Though Cárdenas' career was tragically cut short at an early age when he was murdered at 27 in a Mexico City bar, both his memory and songs definitely have an important place in the history of Mexican music on both sides of the border.⁸⁹ His songs, such as "Nunca" (Never), "Caminante del Mayab," (Traveler of the Mayab), "Ojos tristes" (Sad Eyes), "Flor" (Flower), and "Un rayito de sol" (A Little Sunbeam) are as fresh today as they were seventy-five years ago.

Not all the prominent Mexican musicians active in California and the United States were singers. Many were orchestra or band leaders, instrumentalists, or composers (or several of these). Two musicians serve as representative examples of the many performers active in these musical spheres in California and the United States during the first half of the twentieth century—José Perches Enríquez and Eduardo Vigil y Robles.

Mexican composer and pianist José Perches Enríquez (1882–1939), who made recordings of Mexican popular music in the United States, was a longtime Los Angeles resident. Perches, a member of a musical family (both his parents were pianists and his father was also a composer), received formal musical training in his native city of Chihuahua, where he frequently performed as a boy. After he moved to Mexico City as a teenager, he studied at the National Conservatory with composer, piano virtuoso, and piano pedagogue Julio Ituarte (1845–1905)—one of nineteenth-century Mexico's most important musical figures. Like his teacher Ituarte, Perches Enríquez also taught for many years at the National Conservatory. Appearing as a piano soloist on both sides of the border, he reportedly served as operatic tenor Enrico Caruso's piano accompanist at one time. He was also the composer of the well-known *danza* "Secreto eterno" (Eternal Secret), later used as the theme song for a Mexican film of the same name, released in 1942.

Perches Enríquez had a varied and successful musical career in both Mexico and the United States. But by the 1930s he had moved permanently to California.

Perches Enríquez made recordings of popular Mexican dance music in San Francisco in 1928 with his own orchestra.⁹⁰ In Los Angeles in 1935 he recorded with members of Los Madrugadores, the important Mexican-American musical group and pioneers of California's early Spanish-language radio, founded by the politically active singer and songwriter Pedro J. González (1896–1995).⁹¹ Perches Enríquez also worked as a composer, arranger, and performer in Hollywood motion-picture studios. Like many of the other Mexican musicians active in the United States, his life and career do not enter the current scholarship on Mexican American music and society.

Composer and conductor Eduardo Vigil y Robles, who served as music director for Spanish-language recordings for the Victor company in the 1920s and 1930s, was very active professionally on both sides of the border. He was also the composer of the well-known popular songs "La nor-teña" (The Northern Girl) and "Chula la mañana" (How Beautiful Is the Morning). Vigil y Robles, a member of a distinguished Mexican musical family, conducted the Victor house orchestra for many recordings of zarzuela and operetta in Spanish as well as Spanish and Latin American popular songs, including, for example, extensive selections from Franz Lehár's operetta *El conde de Luxemburgo* (The Count of Luxembourg) and Oscar Straus's operetta *El soldado de chocolate* (The Chocolate Soldier) (with starring singers Margarita Cueto, José Moriche, Juan Pulido) in New York in 1931.⁹² These Spanish-language versions of popular Austrian and German musical theater pieces were geared to the large Latin American and Spanish markets as well as to local Latino communities in the United States, including those in California and the Southwest. This repertory mirrors that of the Esperanza Iris operetta company in Mexico, which also toured

throughout the Americas (including California) at about the same time with a similar theatrical focus. Vigil y Robles had an important impact on the dissemination of Mexican and Latin American popular styles throughout the world in the 1920s and 1930s because of his leading position as director of Spanish-language records for the Victor Company, which at the time was perhaps the dominant record company.

In addition to the numerous performers profiled above, hundreds of other Mexican (and Latin American) musicians, both famous and less well known, were very active in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century, especially in Los Angeles, San Antonio, and New York recording studios, and in Spanish-language theaters in these and other cities.⁹³ Their participation in Mexican musical life in California and elsewhere in the United States was crucial to its development.⁹⁴ All of these musicians made important contributions to musical life in both countries. In fact, the majority of the best- and lesser-known Mexican popular performers and composers were active in the United States from the time of the Mexican Revolution to World War II. And even more Mexican musicians continue to maintain cross-border careers today.

In conclusion, while much scholarly work has been accomplished in documenting and studying Mexican classic films and theater, and books and articles have appeared that investigate Mexico's incredibly rich popular and art music heritage, much more work is needed in order to better understand the symbiotic relationship between the Spanish-language stage and the film, recording, and radio studio in Mexico, California, and the United States during the period represented in this study. For it was then that Mexican composers, songwriters, singers, instrumentalists, actors, and directors created new entertainment industries that endure today, albeit in often radically changed forms. They also created new musical and theatrical repertoires that had a great impact on Mexico's cultural and commercial life, and also traveled well beyond Mexico's

national borders, northwards to the United States, and throughout Latin America, Spain, and Europe. A particularly striking aspect of these performers' musical careers is that many of them were so versatile in the types of music they performed and composed, not only various types of Mexican and American popular music, but also opera and concert ("classical") music. They were also highly mobile. While the connections between Mexico's very rich musical culture and that of California during this period still remain relatively unknown in the state, this study explores certain very visible aspects of these connections: that is, the artistic work of those musicians (and singing actors) who traveled in search of fame and fortune across the international border and the boundaries between high and popular culture. Many of them found it.

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“Woody Sez”:

Woody Guthrie, *The People's Daily World*, and Indigenous Radicalism

BY RONALD BRILEY

Bound for Glory, director Hal Ashby's 1976 cinematic tribute to Woody Guthrie, concludes with the folksinger departing California for the greener pastures of New York City in early 1940. As he rides a freight train, Guthrie, portrayed by David Carradine, sings “This Land Is Your Land,” which he wrote in February 1940. Under the direction of Ashby and the cinematography of Haskell Wexler, the film's conclusion becomes a bicentennial tribute to the resilient spirit of the American people. Film viewers, however, would certainly not surmise that Guthrie had penned his anthem in angry response to what the folksinger considered the narrow nationalism of Irving Berlin's “God Bless America.” In fact, the film ignores Guthrie's association with the Communist Party and radical politics during his sojourn in California from 1936 to 1940.¹

In 1939 Guthrie penned a column entitled “Woody Sez” for the *People's Daily World*, the West Coast Communist newspaper published in San Francisco. The “Woody Sez” columns provide evidence that the time Guthrie spent in California during the late 1930s, observing first-hand the harsh conditions experienced by the migrants from the dust bowl, contributed to radicalizing the folksinger. The myth promulgated by Hal Ashby's *Bound for Glory* that Guthrie was simply a populist celebrating the American spirit before heading to New York City is negated by the Guthrie pieces in the *People's Daily World*. The Woody Guthrie who penned “This Land Is Your Land” in 1940 was, indeed, an American radical who

raised serious questions as to whether the American capitalist system was serving the interests of the common working people.

Guthrie's politics are often ambiguous, paradoxical, and confusing. There is considerable dispute as to whether Guthrie actually joined the Communist Party during the late 1930s. Biographer Ed Cray accepts the view of many Guthrie family members and associates that the folksinger lacked the discipline and ideological commitment to be a Party member. Communist Party organizer Dorothy Healey, however, described Guthrie as active in California Party affairs during the late 1930s, and biographer Joe Klein accepts Guthrie's assertion that he joined the Party sometime in

In 1939 Oklahoma-born folksinger Woody Guthrie penned a column entitled “Woody Sez” for the People's Daily World, the West Coast Communist Party newspaper published in San Francisco. The “Woody Sez” columns provide evidence that the time Guthrie spent in California during the late 1930s, observing first-hand the harsh conditions experienced by the migrants from the dust bowl, contributed to radicalizing the folksinger. Guthrie is pictured here in the 1940s, after his stint writing the “Woody Sez” column for the People's World Daily.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AL AUMULLER, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION



1936. Supporting evidence for Guthrie's association with the Communist Party may be found in the folksinger's "Woody Sez" columns. Guthrie appeared faithfully to follow the shifting and often confusing Communist Party line in the late 1930s. With the rise of Nazi Germany, the Communist Party pursued the Popular Front policy from 1935 to 1939, emphasizing collective security and cooperation with anti-fascist bourgeois democracies. The Popular Front was abandoned with the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Non-aggression Pact in August 1939. While the Soviet Union cooperated with the Nazis and pursued a policy of aggression against their neighbors in Finland and Poland, American Communists denounced Western democracies for pursuing militaristic solutions to the international situation. This line, however, changed with the invasion of the Soviet Union by Nazi Germany on 22 June 1941. For the duration of the Second World War, the Communist Party in the United States dropped its oppositional policies, supporting the war effort and celebrating communism as twentieth-century Americanism.²

But Guthrie's political ideas were hardly limited to the Communist Party line. In *A Race of Singers*, Bryan K. Garman suggests that Guthrie fits within the democratic legacy of Walt Whitman championing the common working people of the nation. Guthrie's political rhetoric expressed in his journals, music, and columns does indicate Whitman-like qualities; in addition to such traditional American ideas as populist denunciation of concentrated wealth, the democratic promise contained in the Declaration of Independence, debtor rebellion going back to Daniel Shays, and a Jeffersonian celebration of the pursuit of happiness.

In his 1943 autobiography *Bound for Glory*, Guthrie plays down his radical politics at a time when the United States and Soviet Union were engaged in a patriotic crusade against fascism. The book's title, according to Guthrie, was meant to convey that the common people were bound for glory and not simply to glorify a wandering minstrel who epitomized the struggles of work-

ing people.³ In his examination of Guthrie and the Communist Party, however, Ronald Cohen finds no contradiction in Guthrie's admiration for the Party and celebration of the American experience. Like many in the 1930s, the folksinger was attracted to the Party's basic domestic goals, "while resisting any slavish obedience to Party doctrines or dictates." He was more a follower of Debs and Lincoln than Lenin and Stalin, but he perceived communism as offering a vision of equality, democracy, and peace. Cohen concludes that Guthrie was "a Red, but of his own stripe—no contradiction in a political climate where anything was possible, as Woody demonstrated."⁴ Thus, the political ideas of Guthrie were unorthodox and often paradoxical. He envisioned a commonwealth in which working people would receive their fair share of the nation's resources, and Guthrie did not seem to care whether the means for achieving this community came through communism, Christian socialism, populism, Jeffersonianism, or traditional American radicalism. But in these versions of collectivist radicalism Guthrie was much more than the romantic individualist depicted in Hal Ashby's *Bound for Glory*.

Woodrow Wilson Guthrie was born July 14, 1912, in Okemah, Oklahoma. His perception of humanity was grounded in an agrarian tradition of protest in Oklahoma, where a strong Socialist Party operated before the First World War; a Christian tradition that Jesus was the champion of the poor and a meek who would drive the money changers out of the temple; a tragic family history; and the experience of his generation with the Depression and Dust Bowl of the 1930s.

The Socialist Party often prospered in sections of Oklahoma where holiness sects opposed the materialism and modernism of established churches, and Guthrie was certainly a product of this milieu. While he never attended church on a regular basis, Guthrie was baptized into the

Church of Christ, reading and quoting frequently from the Bible. When asked by leftist journalist Ed Robbin to name the people he most admired, Guthrie quickly replied Will Rogers and Jesus Christ. Perceiving Jesus as a socialist outlaw, in songs such as "They Laid Poor Jesus Christ in his Grave," Guthrie described Jesus as a working-class carpenter who championed the rights of the common people until he was betrayed by the rich and their selfish interests.⁵

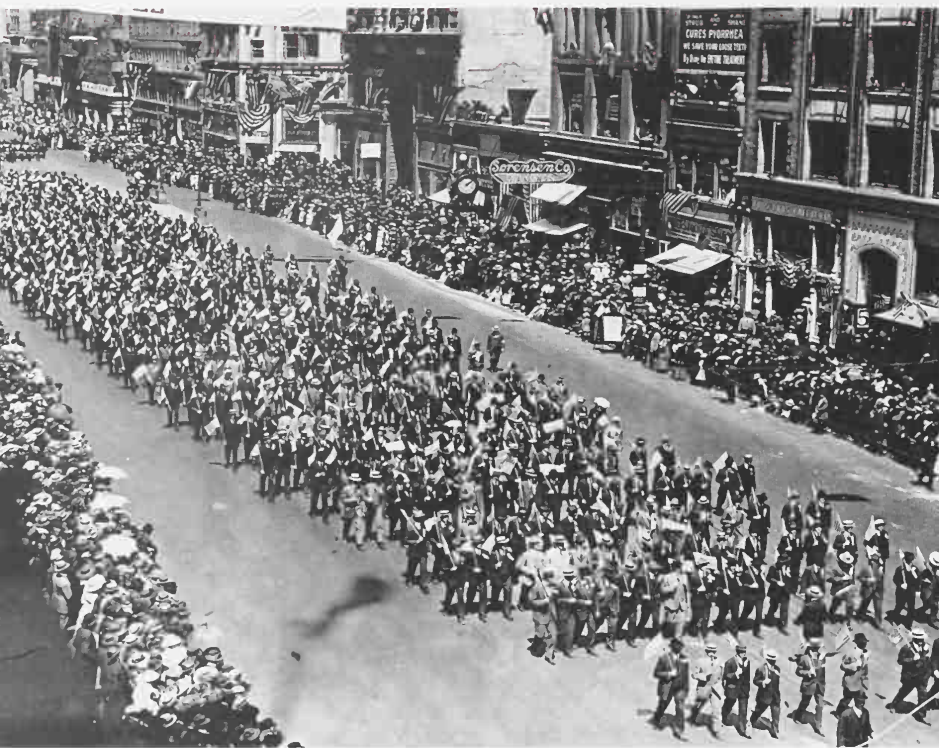
But Guthrie's family origins were not really so common. His father Charley Guthrie was a small-town real estate entrepreneur who opposed the Socialist Party. During the oil boom of the early 1920s, Charley Guthrie lost out to the big business rolling into the state, and the family became destitute. But even before the economic mishaps, personal tragedy struck the family. Woody's older sister Clara died after her dress caught fire. Many locals blamed Guthrie's mother, Nora for the death, and she did begin to behave in an eccentric fashion, wandering the streets in various states of undress. In June 1927, Charley Guthrie was severely burned in another fire started by his wife. Nora was institutionalized and diagnosed as suffering from Huntington's chorea, a degenerative disease attacking the brain and central nervous system. Due to his family history, Woody, a physically small boy, was often ostracized by his peers. Woody's reaction was to perform poorly in academics and play the role of class clown. However, he did read avidly on his own and took pleasure in playing the guitar and harmonica.⁶

With the onslaught of the Depression in 1929, Guthrie joined his father in Pampa, Texas, where Charley found work managing a boarding house. Woody married Mary Jennings, who was then sixteen years old, in October 1933. Two years later, Guthrie's first child was born, and he supported the family by painting signs, reading fortunes, drawing pictures, and playing music. Inspired by the dust storms engulfing the Texas Panhandle, Guthrie began to pen tunes such as "Dusty Old Dust," proclaiming:



Guthrie's columns for the People's Daily World often included drawings as well as his own inimitable prose. Here Guthrie excoriates Wall Street financiers, one of his frequent targets before the onset of World War II.

"WOODY ZEZ: WE PLEGE OUR ALEGIANCE." COURTESY OF THE WOODY GUTHRIE ARCHIVES



Labor leader Tom Mooney was hastily convicted for bombing the 1916 Preparedness Day parade in San Francisco. The parade (shown here after the explosion, according to the photograph's identification), marched through the city streets for nearly four hours and included more than 50,000 marchers. It was held in anticipation of the United States joining the allies in World War I. The bombing killed ten and wounded forty.

Guthrie's anger with the mistreatment of the Okies in California drew him into more radical circles. Guthrie celebrated the pardon of Tom Mooney, who had served twenty-three years in prison, in his columns and with the song "Tom Mooney Is Free" with the final line "... and now let's free California too!"

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FN-00000

"So long, its been good to know you
This dusty old dust is a-gettin' my home
And I've got to be drifting along."

Leaving his family in Pampa, Guthrie headed out to California in 1936 to see what the great migration of Okies really meant.⁷

Guthrie was shocked at the prejudice with which many in California greeted the dust bowl refugees. Traveling by freight, he encountered many former members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and these old Wobblies introduced Guthrie to the music of the legendary Joe Hill. Guthrie began to carry around with him a copy of the *IWW Little Red Song Book*.⁸ Eventually, Guthrie settled with relatives in Glendale, and he was able to obtain a job with his cousin Jack Guthrie singing on radio station KFVD in Los Angeles. Woody soon replaced his cousin and established a popular singing duet with Maxine Crossman, whom he called Lefty Lou.

Guthrie's political contributions to the radio program were solicited by KFVD station owner Frank Burke. In fact, Guthrie did some reporting for Burke's progressive newspaper, *The Light*. Angered by how the capitalist system abandoned the unemployed living in Hoovervilles along the highways and underneath the bridges of America, Guthrie reported, "A drunk don't like his own vomit. And a dizzy Profit System don't like its own filth."⁹

Guthrie's anger with the mistreatment of the Okies in California seemed to draw him into more radical circles. In 1938, Guthrie celebrated the pardon of radical labor leader Tom Mooney, who had served twenty-three years in prison for allegedly exploding a bomb during the 1916 Preparedness Day Parade in San Francisco, by composing "Mr. Tom Mooney Is Free." Ed Robbin, who was a correspondent with the *People's Daily*

World and also provided radio commentary for KFVD during the Popular Front period, asked Guthrie to perform the song for a Party function. When Robbin inquired as to whether the folksinger had any reservations about being associated with the Communist Party, Guthrie replied, "Left wing, right wing, chicken-wing—it's all the same thing to me. I sing my songs wherever I can sing 'em. So if you'll have me, I'll be glad to go." The crowd loved Guthrie's song, especially his last line . . . and now let's free California too!¹⁰

While Guthrie's ambiguous reply to Robbin indicates that the folksinger was not prepared to endorse Marxist-Leninist ideology fully, he seemed to find no fundamental conflict between the principles of communism and American radicalism ground in concepts of Jeffersonianism, populism, and Christian socialism. To Guthrie, communism was simply common sense. Writing in one of his voluminous journals, Guthrie asserted,

When there shall be no want among you,
because you'll own everything in common.
When the rich will give their goods into
the poor. I believe this way. This is the
Christian way and it is already on a big
part of the earth and it will come. To
own everything in common. That's what
the Bible says. Common means all of us.
This is old 'Commonism.'

Accordingly, Guthrie became a regular performer at Communist Party fund-raising activities, and he even commenced a column for the *People's Daily World*, which appeared on the editorial page under the heading "Woody Sez." The column, which eventually included 174 commentaries and ran from May 1939 until January 1940, featured Guthrie's cartoons and such down home philosophy as, "I ain't a communist necessarily, but I been in the red all my life." The Communist publication tended to be less doctrinaire than its New York City equivalent the *Daily Worker* and enjoyed a circulation in the tens of thousands during the late 1930s.¹¹

A close reading of these columns indicates that Guthrie was a great deal more complicated than

the country bumpkin persona he sometimes assumed in his writing. Beneath the colloquialisms and the frequent misspellings is an intellectual whose writing articulated the suffering as well as the longing of the Dust Bowl refugees for

The political ideas of Guthrie were unorthodox and often paradoxical. He envisioned a commonwealth in which working people would receive their fair share of the nation's resources, and Guthrie did not seem to care whether the means for achieving this came through communism, Christian socialism, populism, Jeffersonianism, or traditional American radicalism.

a better life. Guthrie's columns do not rely upon quotations from Marx and Lenin, but they certainly indicate a strong sense of class consciousness and a disdain for what capitalism had accomplished for common working people. While not a theoretician by any means, Guthrie's pieces also offer some evidence of Party influence as the folksinger supported the shifting Communist Party line in 1939 and 1940 regarding the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Nevertheless, Guthrie seemingly maintained his distance from the harsh dictates of Party discipline, essentially envisioning the political organization as a voice for peace, equality, democracy, and justice.

In his first "Woody Sez" column, Guthrie introduced himself to readers in what he termed his "awgowbyografie." When describing his early years in Okemah, Oklahoma, and Pampa, Texas, Guthrie failed to mention the family tragedies

that plagued the Guthries. Instead, Guthrie emphasized the exploitive nature of American capitalism by asserting that bankers had forced farmers off their land in the Southwest. Unable to make ends meet in Pampa, he headed to California hoping to find his relatives, "but I didn't know for shore wich r.r. bridge they was a livin' under, so you see I was a travelin' practically without a magneto. I mean a compass. I didn't know where the heck I was a goin'." Of course, Guthrie did find those relatives, although not actually living under a bridge, and they helped him generate his radio show. Guthrie indicated that he was happy to have an opportunity to write his column because he had "a Hillbilly's Eye-View of the hole Migratious Labor movement

Guthrie concluded that Wall Street speculators were rattlesnakes who made "easy street impassable" for the people.¹³

Normally, Guthrie tried to interject some humor into his denunciation of the grafters, but he had little time for levity when fellow migrants were attacked. Guthrie was angered by an article in the reactionary *Los Angeles Times* that asserted that the migrants were nothing more than gold diggers seeking to take advantage of the taxpayers and property owners by collecting relief. An incensed Guthrie wrote:

Scenes of Life in a Trailer Camp City were painted to call your attention to the untold, inhuman suffering that these people are willing to go thru—just for some of that "easy relief money." How the Sheriff's Force cleaned out the jungles and drove the Shak dwellers out of the River Bottom, set fire to their cardboard Houses, and destroyed their patch-work shelters—was told about—not to make you feel in your heart a genuine sorrow for your brothers and sisters of our American Race that's got to live in such places, but to try to make you believe that these Underprivileged people are designing in their hearts to "Dig Some Easy Gold—of your taxpayers."

In this defense of his fellow migrants, Guthrie drops many of his colloquialisms and writes in a more straight-forward fashion. He maintained that all his people wanted was a chance to work and earn a living. The proud Oklahoman, however, did desert his collective approach for an individualistic conclusion to his piece, observing that he had been in California for over two years, surviving on less than one dollar a day, but he had never applied for relief. Although Guthrie would always struggle with holding down a regular job, he certainly recognized the importance of work to the "Okie migrants."¹⁴

Guthrie also championed housing as a basic human right to which all were entitled. He described

The folksinger envisioned an earthly paradise in which, "Should the Master appear again on earth, that he would take a look at the churches, a look at the sinners, and associate himself at once with the sinners."

from the South to the Pacific Coast. An' because I figgered it wood be helpful to my people, the dustbowl refugees, I was tickled to get the chanct."¹²

Guthrie chronicled and championed the common people with a strong sense of class consciousness, often employing populist rhetoric. On 18 May 1939, he observed that the wealthy were concerned that providing relief to the poor might lower the standard of living. Guthrie defined the standard of living as a home, car, clothes, groceries, radio, an electric ice box, and a job with decent wages. Things that the people did not have because the wealthy "got it from you an me." He continued this theme of exploitation by describing Wall Street as the place where "the workers git worked on an the reapers get reaped—an the farmers get plowed under."

houses as places to “raise children in,” but in Depression America corporations were using houses to “rob workin’ folks” by charging exorbitant rents. In a refrain similar to his tribute to Oklahoma bank robber and folk hero Pretty Boy Floyd, Guthrie concluded that working people could be robbed “with a gun ‘er with a house.” He continued this theme the following day by observing that policemen were employed to protect the property of the wealthy. Guthrie stated, “A policeman will jest stand there an let a banker rob a farmer, or a finance man rob a workin’ man. But if a farmer robs the banker—you wood have a hole dern army of cops out a shooting at him.” Guthrie’s ideas on social banditry may not have agreed with Party orthodoxy emphasizing collective action and identity rather than individual adventurism, but they reflected the reality of many people in his native Oklahoma. As Guthrie wrote in “The Ballad of Pretty Boy Floyd”

“Now as through this world I ramble
I’ve seen lots of funny men
Some will rob you with a six gun
And some with a fountain pen
But as through this life you roam
You will never see an outlaw
Drive a family from its home.”¹⁵

In addition to bankers and landlords who were supported by a corrupt legal system, Guthrie had nothing but contempt for loan sharks and private utilities earning immense profits at the expense of the poor. In several columns, he discussed widows, Native Americans, and veterans whose gas or electrical services were cancelled. An angry Guthrie proclaimed,

Dear Gas Companies: Uneducated, unenlightened, and uninformed as I am, provides me with a magnificent opportunity, and elegant excuse to tell you right here and now that I oftimes have nightmares in which there go crawling and creeping species of creatures similar to those which are symbolized by the practices you use.

His venom was also apparent for furniture dealers who applied high rates of interest to the pur-

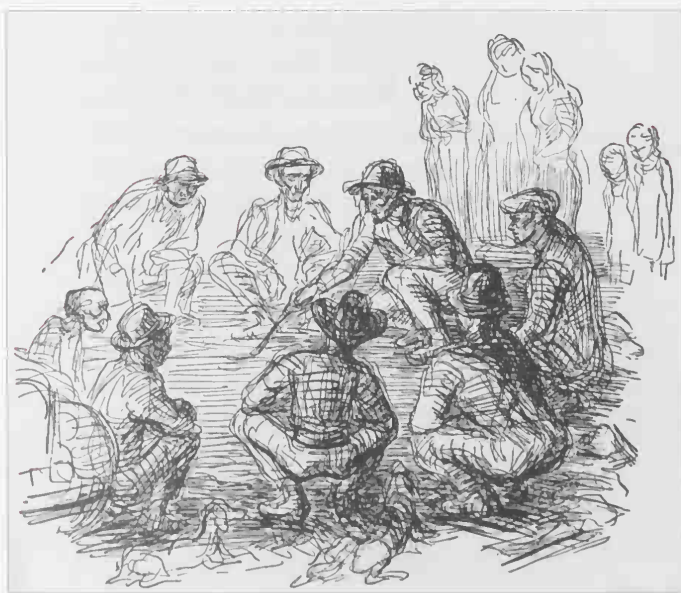
chases by working class people, who could not afford to pay cash up front for their goods. Casting the creditors into the same circle of hell as bankers and utility companies, Guthrie wrote, “Dear Credit People: I have come to the conclusion, after long meditation, zealous forethought, and silent prayer, that your are a bunch of Low Down Thieves . . . and I am unable to think otherwise.” Personalizing the issue as he often did in his columns, Guthrie complained that it was difficult for his twenty-one-year-old brother George to get married because creditors were attempting to “enslave, degrade, depress, deprive, and otherwise ‘rob’ our young folks that’s a falling in Love, and a getting married.”¹⁶ In this passage, Guthrie takes a rather traditional line of American protest that selfish interests were blocking the Jeffersonian pursuit of happiness.

Guthrie also addressed basic issue of health care in a column reporting that his family was expecting a baby. The singer understood that doctors, like everyone else, had to make a living, but he simply could not comprehend any way that a physician could charge as much for his services one night delivering a baby as a working man earned in six months of laboring. Guthrie contemplated, “Funny how one feller can hit a few licks of some sort of ‘inspired work’—like a doctor, or a lawyer, and take all the inspiration out of you for a year.” Celebrating the dignity and worth of all labor, Guthrie in his unique way appeared to call for a system of universal health care, writing, “I believe in a government wholesale price on babies, delivered to your house, cause they double the pressure, triple the increase, and quadruple the price at the hosspistol.”¹⁷

In denouncing creditors and advocating for health care, Guthrie appears to fit within the reform tradition of the New Deal. The paradoxical Guthrie, however, also espoused more revolutionary sentiments in his “Woody Sez” columns. On 24 June 1939, he sounded like Marx proclaiming that the workers had nothing to lose but their chains. Stopping just short of calling for a revolution, Guthrie exclaimed, “Down with Wall

street. Down with salary loan sharks—down with the rape mad finance fiends—We are civilized to the brink of poverty, slavery, an slaughter. If this be treason —make the most sof it.” In his unique fashion, Guthrie also sometimes used more Marxist analysis regarding common ownership for the means of production. In discussing his trip to Redding, where workers had gathered in hope of gaining employment on a dam project, Guthrie wrote, “When you get to where you perduce for Use instead of for a silly Profit—you’ll have a cinch on 3 squares a day, on a job.” The next day, however, Guthrie returned to more revolutionary rhetoric. He insisted, “Lots of the big money boys is a willin’ to you a workin’ for their Freedom—an’ in persuit of their Happiness but that is like a puttin’ the constitution down in Pig Latin. To expect help, groceries, freedom and fair chance from a selfish, greedy, whole-hog, profiteer—is like milkin’ a dead cow. It won’t work.”¹⁸ Despite such a pessimistic forecast for reforming the American system, Guthrie did not totally depart from Party orthodoxy regarding Popular Front cooperation with anti-fascist democracies such as Roosevelt’s New Deal.

During the summer of 1939 before the signing of the Hitler-Stalin Nonaggression Pact in August, Guthrie supported the reelection of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal. Guthrie continued to denounce those exploiting the common people, but he appeared to tone down his rhetoric a bit, providing a less incendiary or revolutionary approach to the political and economic crisis of capitalism in the United States. Instead, Guthrie returned to extolling the virtues of the migrants and poor. On July 7, he discussed his comfort level when walking down “skid row” in Los Angeles, asserting that he trusted hobos more than the “playfolks that populate our banks and hotels.” In another piece about the migrants, Guthrie maintained that they were honest and true because they were forced to live in a state of nature with few possessions and empty bellies. Guthrie proclaimed, “You Land Shirks, and other Friskers, listen to me, the hungrier you make us, the wiser we get . . . cause all of the good books on religion advice you to fast and think . . . and the fastest you can think is when youre right hungrier.” Guthrie also had supportive remarks regarding how John Steinbeck portrayed the migrants in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Guthrie wrote,



Woody Guthrie admired John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) and its depiction of migrant worker realities. He recommended it in one of his columns: "John's book is out to show you just exactly what th Arkies, an th Oakies, the Kansies, an th Texies, an-all of the farmers an workers has to go through—so's somebody can make a profit off of em."

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN GROTH, LIVING LIBRARY EDITION OF *THE GRAPES OF WRATH* (1947). CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

John's book is out to show you just exactly what th Arkies, an th Oakies, the Kansies, an th Texies, an-all of the farmers an workers has to go through—so's somebody can make a profit off of em. John's book was a little to poetry—like to ever take a holt among the real, genuine 'dusties'—but it will hit right where folks don't know what other folks has to go through—excetp by books."

And at three dollars, the singer concluded that the migrants would scarcely be able to afford Steinbeck's novel.¹⁹

As Guthrie reaffirmed his faith in the people, he also continued to defend the Communist Party and its supporters. On 17 July 1939, he reported that former Party member John Leech was testifying before the House Un-American Activities Committee and denouncing communism. Guthrie labeled Leech as a Judas figure, observing, "But thats the way it was when they nailed the carpenter to the cross—they took the word of the folks that didn't know anything a'bout him, and then—a feller named Judas, that deserted his party—sold out his teacher, an his own soule—for about 30 hunks of silver."

Guthrie often used Christian imagery in both his music and writings. When Guthrie was a young boy, the Socialist Party was an important political force in Oklahoma; however, the Party in the Southwest did not champion a materialistic atheism. Instead, the socialist tradition in states such as Oklahoma embraced a millennial Christian tradition in which the meek would inherit the earth. Accordingly, the Socialist Party often did well in areas where such Pentecostal groups as the Church of Christ enjoyed popular support. In *Grass Roots Socialism*, James Green argues, "In the early 1900s the new holiness sects of the Southwest clearly represented the primitive Christianity of the oppressed. The holiness movement was a 'radical opponent' of materialism and modernism in the established churches, and in that sense it was a product of the same kind of class consciousness



Guthrie heaped scorn on William Randolph Hearst and his media empire: "When a guy comes out a raisin' hell a bout the megertory workers, and hoboos, and poore folks, an worken people, an scares hell of em with cartoons and old storys in a newspaper—an tries to keep em ignerent—an rule em by fear—like th Hearst papers does—I ain't got no use for em." In this diatribe against Hearst, Guthrie was, as often the case, more precise in his denunciation than articulating how exactly change was to come about in the world.

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FN-32559

that led poor people to socialism.”²⁰ While Guthrie may have been a “red,” he was certainly no atheist, maintaining a faith in Christian socialism led by a plain-speaking working-class carpenter who was opposed to vested economic and political interests. This somewhat simplistic belief in a Christian socialism allowed Guthrie to eschew the doctrinal disputes between Communists and socialists.

Guthrie also defended labor leader Harry Bridges. The United States government wanted to deport the Australian-born leader of the longshoremen for his Communist connections. Guthrie asserted that Bridges believed that the union was Americanism, “and Abe Lincoln said the same thing.” In a song written for Bridges, Guthrie proclaimed:

“Now that th song about Harry Bridges
And the Union Battle he has fought—
‘Unionism is Americanism.’
And that’s what I have all ways thought.”

Guthrie believed that Bridges was in trouble because of the “red-baiting” pursued by William Randolph Hearst and his media empire. According to Guthrie, “When a guy comes out a raisin’ hell a bout the megertory workers, and hoboos, and poore folks, an worken people, an scares hell of em with cartoons and old storys in a newspaper—an tries to keep em ignerent—an rule em by fear—like th Hearst papers does—I ain’t got no use for em.”²¹

In this diatribe against Hearst, Guthrie was, as often the case, more precise in denouncing the grafters than articulating how exactly change was to come about in the world. However, he maintained a simple vision in which a nation governed by the working people would usher in progress, while in a country “run by Money rule, you got rotten politicians, rotten banks, rotten crops, rotten clothing, rotten gangsters, and rotten ever thing.” The vision of a workers’ state, which ostensibly existed in the Soviet Union, appeared to describe Guthrie’s ideal government. Yet, the ambiguous Guthrie spent little time and energy waxing poetically about the workers’ par-

adise in the Soviet Union. While often defending communism and adhering to essential aspects of the Party line, the singer was an American who wanted to create a people’s government in the United States that would hearken back to the founding principles of the Declaration of Independence that all men were created equal. Guthrie commented upon a Japanese family he encountered in his travels. They had migrated to the United States in search of freedom. Guthrie concluded,

That’s how come the U. S. A. to get started—And that’s what has keep her a goin . . . Freedom. Folks is a lookin for Freedom. Here and hereafter, the best thing they ask for is Freedom. A Job of Work, a fair chance an Honest Share of the stuff they perduce . . . they got that much a comin to em, and they are dad-gum shure a goin to Get It. They’ll cross oceans, fight wars, inigerate like birds, go through hell’s high waters, or anything else 1000 times—to get Freedom.²²

This was Woody’s paradise. An America where the common people could find fulfilling work and be free from exploitation. Guthrie placed little faith in organized religion. Instead, he believed in the millennial return of the working-class carpenter, who would bring peace, equality, and justice to the world. The folksinger envisioned an earthly paradise in which,

Should the Master appear again on earth,
that he would take a look at the churches,
a look at the sinners, and associate himself
at once with the sinners . . . as He did before.
Religion is to forget yourself and work
for the good of others. Outside of that there
is no religion . . . no progress . . . no hope
for you, your neighbor, your coming grandchildren.
Find out who is causing the Trouble here in this old World—remove
the power from their hands—place it in the
hands of those who ain’t Greedy—and you
can roll over and go to sleep.

Guthrie was more interested in ends than means, and if the Communist Party could usher in the commonwealth of equality called for by the Prince of Peace, then so be it.²³

With the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact followed by the invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939, it was a difficult time to be a Communist. The Popular Front policy of collective security against fascism was abandoned as Stalin, convinced after the Munich crisis of 1938 that the Western democracies would not stand up to Hitler, determined that the interests of the Soviet Union could best be served by forming a temporary alliance with the Nazi dictator. The shift in policy of the Communist Party in the United States made it apparent to many critics that American Communists were simply following the dictates of the Soviet Union and exercised no independence. Yet, Guthrie did not desert the Party, shifting from the anti-fascist Popular Front to a denunciation of capitalistic war as exploitive of the working class. Although he generally continued to support Roosevelt and the New Deal for reelection in 1940, Guthrie downplayed the upcoming elections in his columns for the fall of 1939. He would not repudiate his leftist sympathies and increasingly focused his attention on questions of war and peace in his writings. A playful Guthrie commented upon his lost songbook, suggesting,

“Well you will find some of them songs to be putty dern left handed. They was so left wing I had to write em with my left hand and sing em with my left tonsil, an string my gittar up backwards to git eny harmony out of em.”

He also wrote a column describing how he was sitting home, “buried about 6 foot deep in some dialecticle matternilisation, an it was a speakin a bout what was real, an what was just pure old imaginin,” when his children wanted to play and eat, but they wanted real not imaginary oranges. For Guthrie, the future was always about the children and creating a better world for them.²⁴

Guthrie increasingly wrote about the impact of war in Europe on the children, and he endorsed the Soviet policy of perceiving World War II as a

“War is a game played by maniacs, who kill each other There are certain men who never think of any other thing besides slaughter. They are blood soaked butchers and they are believed to be heroes Locate the man who profits by war—strip him of his profits and war will end.”
“Woody Sez,” November 22, 1939

capitalist conflict. He observed, “See where Hitler is a gonna jump on the wimmen & children, too, an everybody else says, if you jump on em, we’ll jump on em too, which makes it look like theyre a goin to get jumped on.” A few days later, Guthrie found the origins of the war to lie in the private ownership of scarce resources. He lamented, “Some war. Seems like theyre a fightin to see who owns what . . . Well if th countery belonged to ever body init they coodent no fights break out.” War would be a problem as long as civilization was based on the profit system.²⁵

In support of peace, Guthrie urged workers, who were strapped financially, to donate a day’s pay to maintain the *People’s Daily World* as one of the few voices against war and fascism. Taking on the persona of his new son Bill, Guthrie wrote, “But by the time I grow up to be a man, I want this old world to be, by dam, the people’s world. Not just some chose few, but a world of working people of the working world.”²⁶

Despite Guthrie’s plea for a peaceful world, war was a factor in Europe, and the singer commented on the conflict using football metaphors. Guthrie quipped, “Chamberlain kicked off an Hitler made

a run thru Poland. Mussolini is on the side line. Warsaw got tackled behind the goal post, and lost the ball. Russia is in a huddle and seems to be gaining several yards. Every European radio is broadcasting the game, and every Dictator says his side is wining." Never acknowledging that his analysis also supported Soviet self-interest, the columnist concluded that the war was a failure, squandering precious resources needed by the people. He denounced the European war in the most vehement terms, urging Americans to resist policies of conscription or aid to the British, which would draw the country into a war benefiting corrupt politicians and capitalist grafters. Guthrie exclaimed:

War is a game played by maniacs, who kill each other. It is murder, studied and prepared by insane minds, and followed by a bunch of thieves. You can't believe in life, and wear the uniform of death. There are certain men who never think of any other thing besides slaughter. They are blood soaked butchers and they are believed to be heroes. Three fifths of the people decide to murder the other two fifths, who must take up killing in order to stay alive. Locate the man who profits by war—strip him of his profits and war will end.

In this analysis of the war in Europe before Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, Guthrie voiced the Communist Party line. In his embracing of the Chinese people as victims of Japanese aggression, however, he also reflected a general American sympathy for the Chinese and condemnation of Japanese militarism. Departing from his earlier blanket denunciation of war in Europe with which the Soviets were most concerned, Guthrie wrote, "An'—I aint no prophet—but with a equal break, with powder an' shot, I wood not bet 1 red cent that Japan, or three more like Japan, cood conquer th' spirit of the August an Noble, Peace Worshipping China."²⁷

Although in late 1939 the "Woody Sez" columns were focusing upon issues of war and peace,

Guthrie continued to rail against the exploitation of the working people by big business and profiteers, while calling for a more collectivist future. He envisioned a United States as one big union which everyone would join, concluding, "Now, if you an me an everybody all be longed to th same big union—an then th union was to guarantee you a job all of th time—why, heck—we cood all be richer then we by a dang sight." And Guthrie persisted in his depiction of Jesus Christ as a model for organizing the people to drive the money changers and capitalists from Wall Street. He concluded, "Today we need to make a Whip of small organizations an small movements—an bind them and wind them into one great big 'Whip'—an' drive not only the Money Changing Ideas and thoughts out of our own minds, and our bodily Temple—but all so to drive the Money Changers out of the Temple of our Nation."²⁸ John Steinbeck, much admired by Guthrie, tapped similar sentiments with Preacher Jim Casey and his idea of one big soul.

While embracing this collectivist vision, Guthrie was also unable to abandon his admiration for social outlaws. In an October column, he provided a rousing film review of *Jesse James* (1939), featuring Henry Fonda in the title role. Guthrie praised Frank and Jesse James as victims of the railroads who hired hoodlums to drive the farmers off their land. Even though the railroad bombed their home and killed their mother, the James brothers continued to fight the corrupt railroad interests. Guthrie insisted, "No wonder folks likes to hear songs about the outlaws—they're wrong allright, but not as dirty and sneakin' as some of our so called 'higher ups.'" Guthrie, however, remained an activist, not a film critic. He warned California vigilantes to "polish up your balls and chains," for he was coming to the cotton fields to monitor the progress of the cotton strike.²⁹

In another column, however, Guthrie indicated that he was getting restless in California, speculating where as the "dirtiest of the Dustbowlers" he might migrate to next.³⁰ On 7 January 1940,

Guthrie wrote his final “Woody Sez” column for the *People’s Daily World*. As usual, Guthrie did not bid farewell to all his readers, friends, or family. Guthrie’s adherence to the Communist Party line following the Nazi-Soviet Pact had resulted in a parting of the ways between the radical folksinger and progressive KFVD radio station owner Frank Burke. With nothing to hold him in California and restless once again, Guthrie deposited his wife and children in Pampa before he headed toward a new promised land for migrants of the world, New York City.

A close reading of the “Woody Sez” columns in the *People’s Daily World* provides ample evidence that the California years of the late 1930s were a crucial period in which Guthrie investigated the living conditions of the dust bowl refugees and formulated a radical hybrid political ideology which incorporated elements of Christian socialism, social banditry, populism, Jeffersonianism, collectivism, “commonism,” and the ideology of the Communist Party. While the 1976 Ashby film based on the Guthrie’s autobiography attempted to strip the folksinger of his radicalism, Guthrie was already a committed leftist when he departed California for New York City and composed “This Land Is Your Land” in early 1940. Nevertheless, this radical song continues to be defanged by ignoring the more radical verses that question private property.

“Was a big high wall there that tried to
stop me
A sign was painted said: Private Property
But on the back side, it didn’t say nothing—
God Blessed America for me
One bright sunny morning in the shadow
of the steeple
By the relief office I saw my people—
And they stood there wondering if
God blessed America for me.”³¹

In New York City, Guthrie briefly authored a column for the *Daily Worker* and maintained his association with the Communist Party. Fading health—Guthrie was institutionalized for the last eleven years of his life, suffering from Hunting-

ton’s disease, a degenerative disorder of the central nervous system—spared the folksinger from suffering the full brunt of reactionary McCarthyism in the post World War II period. He never recanted his Communist past and beliefs. As David Shumway suggested in an insightful essay on Guthrie’s legacy, “If we are to understand Woody Guthrie’s place in our cultural history, we can only do so by acknowledging his indigenous radicalism.”³² The “Woody Sez” columns for the *People’s Daily World* illuminate the complexity of Guthrie’s radicalism. Guthrie’s vision of a better world for all of God’s children attempted to fuse elements of traditional American radicalism with Marxism. At times Guthrie’s adherence to the Communist Party makes him appear as somewhat of a “Hillbilly Apparatchik” who slavishly followed the dictates of the Party, but in his celebration of the common people and the promise of American life he was very much a traditional left-wing American populist. In the final analysis, Guthrie found room for Christianity, communism, populism, and Jeffersonianism in his own popular front fighting for social justice during the late 1930s.

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On Comic Opera Revolutions

Maneuver Theory and the Art of War in Mexican California, 1821–45

BY ROBERT PHELPS

“Like the tribes of the Stone Age ever preparing for war but rarely fighting, the Californios cultivated a state of perpetual excitement which culminated in anti-climactic decrees or minor skirmishes; three casualties in one of these fights would represent a major tragedy. Some of the rebels themselves complained of speeches that rang too gloriously, of politicians who were too soft-hearted, of ‘great struggles’ that were more like comic-opera episodes.”¹

So Leonard Pitt observed on the nature of military conflict in Mexican California, a style of war characterized, in the words of James J. Rawls and Walton Bean, by “bombastic ‘pronouncements,’ chesslike marches and counter-marches, and noisy but bloodless artillery duels, just out of range, in which both sides retrieved each other’s cannonballs and fired them back.”² Generally referred to as Alta California’s “comic operas” or “comic opera revolutions,” historians have viewed warfare by and among Californios as a less than serious affair. Never a topic of extensive study, explanations for the low casualties that typified these military maneuvers elicit only passing comment by scholars. Such observations tend to emphasize the notion that Californio society was in some way unique, ranging from comparisons to the nonlethal fighting cultures of California

Indians, to Bancroft’s reflection that mortal combat was somehow against the nature of specific Mexican communities, or even, as Rawls and Bean surmised, the result of intermarriage among Californio families and the fear among combatants that they might find themselves “killing a brother-in-law.”³

Yet when examined through the lens of military history, the art of war in Mexican California appears quite conventional. More than 2,500 years ago, Chinese general Sun Tzu argued that the highest form of generalship consisted of “breaking the enemy’s resistance without fighting . . . the next best is to prevent the junction of the enemy’s forces; the next in order is to attack the enemy’s army in the field; and the worst policy of all is to besiege walled cities. . . .” Translated into today’s military terminology, Sun Tzu was a proponent of “maneuver warfare,” the use of rapid movement to achieve the decisive defeat of military opponents. Throughout history, a number of the world’s “great captains,” from Genghis Kahn and Napoleon to such twentieth-century tank experts as B.J. Liddell Hart and Heinz Guderian, have emphasized maneuver over firepower to decide military encounters.⁴

Maneuver warfare was the principle form of combat utilized by European-style military forces in Mexican California. The reliance on a high mobility-low lethality style of war in Alta California was not the result of military genius, the product of native precedents, or a cultural abhor-

rence for killing, but rather a practical solution to the geographic, logistical, and political realities of the region. The lack of manpower, the shortage of modern weapons, the wide availability of horses, and the personalized nature of military targets compelled the Californios to use rapid movement to defeat similarly equipped opponents, resulting in an extremely low level of lethality by contemporary standards. However, the failure to inflict casualties during white-on-white encounters does not mean that the Californios rejected lethal forms of warfare when such methods provided a clear advantage. Native Americans found that when confronting Californios, the latter followed the practice of their Spanish forebears, drawing on superior firepower to shatter opponents. And, as Stephen Kearny's Army of the West found at the Battle of San Pasqual in December 1846, when properly employed, Californio cavalry was deadly in the field.

In the pages that follow I will present an overview of military conflict in Alta California, from the region's incorporation as an often recalcitrant Mexican province in 1821 to the final rebellion against Mexican authority in 1845. I do not intend to provide an exhaustive study of Californio culture or the individuals involved in combat during the period. Rather, the following essay suggests an alternative framework through which we might interpret the nature of war in Mexican California and the character of the society that crafted it.

MANEUVER THEORY

To comprehend military operations in California during the Mexican period, we must acquaint ourselves with the basic principles of maneuver theory.⁵ Maneuver deliberately rejects attrition warfare, a style of combat that emphasizes the destruction of an enemy's mass, the physical components of an army that includes troops, horses, guns, and so on. To achieve the destruction of the enemy's mass, attrition theorists emphasize the importance of the "decisive battle," where one of the combatants is annihilated in a single



The Californios' reliance on maneuver warfare—called "comic opera warfare" by some scholars for its small number of casualties and long-winded pronouncements by combatants—was a combination of tradition, adaptation to local conditions, and the geography of power in Mexican California.

Californio Juan Alvarado was the progeny of two military families, which inherited their low lethality fighting of wars from Spain. Alvarado's deft handling of his small forces ensured victories against Governor Nicolás Gutiérrez in 1836, residents of southern California resisting his own rule as governor in 1837 and 1838, and Governor Manuel Micheltorena's army in 1845.

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Not all conflicts fought in Mexican California resulted in few casualties. Californios subduing native populations resisting their rule killed many native fighters. For example, in 1834 Commander Mariano Vallejo led a campaign against the Satiyomi, resulting in the deaths of two hundred Indians and the capture of three hundred. Vallejo reported his own losses in a single three-hour battle as "six soldiers . . . killed and thirty-two of my veterans wounded, besides thirty Indian allies being taken prisoner and afterwards beheaded."

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engagement. Military historians often focus on such decisive combats, from Waterloo to Desert Storm, seeming to view military operations that do not result in huge numbers of killed and wounded as unworthy of serious consideration. Moreover, emphasis on the decisive battle often leads historians to overlook the study of the campaign, actions over extended periods that regularly decide the final outcome of a conflict.⁶

Maneuver warfare rejects the quest for the decisive battle and instead focuses on the psychological dimension of war, seeking to create "the defeat phenomenon" in the minds of opponents. There are few examples in military history where victory was achieved by the complete destruction of an adversary. Rather, defeat is achieved when an enemy *believes* it is defeated, when it loses the will to go on fighting. To achieve this psychological result, maneuver theorists emphasize the concepts of *deception*, *preemption*, *dislocation*, and *disruption*.⁷

Sun Tsu argued that "all warfare is based upon deception," and practitioners of maneuver seek to use deception to hide the position of a friendly force, compel a commander to over- or underestimate the capabilities of an opponent, force an army to attack under disadvantageous conditions, or even surrender before an attack is attempted.⁸ *Preemption* is defined as attacking prior to the official outbreak of hostilities, before an opponent is militarily ready. Viewed by many as an "unfair" method of combat, for maneuver theorists, if preemption yields victory without extended fighting, so much the better.⁹

Dislocation is the next concept of maneuver warfare. Instead of fighting an opponent on its terms, the friendly force avoids any combat in which the enemy can bring their might to bear. Positional dislocation involves moving an enemy from the decisive point of conflict, or removing the decisive point away from an enemy. Functional dislocation, on the other hand, neutralizes an enemy's strength by technology or tactics. Spanish field

fortifications and battlefield armor, for example, functionally dislocated the muscle-powered weapons of California Indians.

Disruption, on the other hand, involves the destruction of the enemy's *center of gravity*, defined as the enemy's critical weakness. Cities are such *critical weaknesses*, because they function as seats of government and centers of population and production, as well as communication hubs. A center of gravity can also be an enemy headquarters, whose loss interrupts the effective coordination of combat units, or the blocking of supply lines and geographic positions, which erodes the fighting capability of an opposing army. In this regard, movement is the linchpin of maneuver warfare, because its adherents attempt to vector their forces toward the enemy center of gravity. Cutting a supply line might not result in the destruction of an army, but the presence of the enemy in the rear, the idea that escape is increasingly unlikely, might produce panic and rout an opponent.¹⁰

THE MILITARY CULTURE OF MEXICAN CALIFORNIA

The Californios' partial reliance on maneuver warfare was a combination of tradition, adaptation to local conditions, and the peculiar nature of their centers of gravity. The small armies in Mexican California were largely composite units, a complex blend of the self-appointed *gente de razón* (wealthier Californios who considered themselves to be "pure-blooded" Spaniards), Mexican troops on deployment in California, Native American auxiliaries, and foreign mercenaries. Some units were official organizations, while others were ad hoc groups. Yet in spite of the eclectic composition of military forces in California, we can draw a number of conclusions about their nature and capabilities.

First, war is in large measure a cultural product, and the Californios inherited their war-fighting culture from Spain. Pitt's comparisons with primitive war suggest that the comic operas were akin to the highly ritualistic, low lethality style of com-

bat practiced by native Californians prior to the Spanish conquest. Such characterizations ignore the violent nature of the Californios' wars against Indians, their relatively successful skirmishes with the Americans in 1846–47, as well as the fact that not all combatants were Californios. Certainly Micheltorena's "*cholo*" army, made up of convicts from Mexico, was not restrained by any prohibitions on killing. Moreover, in spite of such practices as the *pronunciamento* that preceded military conflicts in Alta California, these campaigns were not the scheduled confrontations of primitive warfare, where armies met on commonly chosen ground and elders stood by ready to mediate if casualties outweighed the benefits of battle. Rather, maneuvers involved concealed movement, spontaneous contact, and calculated risk taking. That two such battles took place at Cahuenga Pass was not indicative of any ritualistic penchant on the part of the Californios, but rather their recognition that the pass controlled the northern approaches to the pueblo of Los Angeles.¹¹

Suggestions that the *gente de razón* were inclined to mimic primitive styles of war also minimize the European ancestry of combatants. Juan Alvarado, who led a number of campaigns, was the progeny of two military families. His paternal grandfather was a member of the Catalanian Volunteers, the military component of the Sacred Expedition of 1769, while his father served with the cavalry company of Monterey.¹² Pío and Andrés Pico, prominent southern dons who played important roles in the political disputes of the 1830s and 1840s as well as resistance to the American invasion, were the sons of the company corporal of the San Diego garrison. A number of Mexican governors, particularly Nicolás Gutiérrez, Manuel Micheltorena, and Manuel Victoria, were army officers.¹³

Consistent with their Spanish lineage, the organization and equipment of military units in California followed the European model. Troops were uniformed and organized into companies identi-

fied by presidio, resembling a miniature version of the regimental systems of European states. Units were, in theory at least, well armed with muskets and sidearms. Artillery could be found at the presidios, and occasionally mounted on limbers. Regular troops were drilled in the tactics used by post-Napoleonic armies, which sought to destroy an enemy through the coordinated use of firepower.¹⁴

With professional or ancestral links to the Spanish and Mexican militaries and equipped with gunpowder weapons, the Californios, in principle at least, accepted lethal forms of combat. The Spanish invasion and subjugation of much of the Americas and their brutalizing of native peoples reinforced the absence of cultural restraints on battlefield killing. The French Revolution's linkage of war with mass politics further legitimized high levels of lethality on the battlefield, an association that found expression in subsequent rebellions throughout Latin America in the post-Napoleonic period. The long-winded pronouncements that often preceded the comic operas revealed not a cultural aversion to killing, but more the Californios' conventional Western appreciation that violence among whites could only be legitimized by its relation to a higher political goal.¹⁵

WHITE-NATIVE WARFARE IN MEXICAN CALIFORNIA

The Californios' cultural acceptance of lethality on the battlefield was exemplified by their military operations against California Indians, extremely violent campaigns that stood in stark contrast to the relatively bloodless comic operas. The gente de razón's small numbers and sense of vulnerability made them more than willing to kill unconverted Indians as well as rebellious neophytes. Mass insurrection and even limited defiance threatened to unhinge Californio hegemony, and captured Indian rebels were sometimes executed. Although racial attitudes certainly played a part in the larger casualties embodied within white-native conflicts, such prejudices were not the sole reason for the large number of dead and

wounded in such encounters. Another explanation is that, when confronting natives, Californios shunned maneuver tactics in favor of attrition.

The gente de razón's emphasis on attrition against Indian adversaries drew from the fact that, in contrast to the relatively nonlethal maneuvers, white versus native warfare pitted unlike forces against each other. During the initial stages of the conquest, the Spaniards possessed a decisive advantage in the novel quality of their horses and guns. Although natives resisted European incursion, their rebellions at San Diego in 1775, San Gabriel in 1785, and the Chumash Rebellion of 1821 targeted the missions where garrisons were small, while the fact that the four presidios were never an object of assault suggests that Indians deliberately avoided the superior firepower of their conquerors.¹⁶

Prior to Mexican independence, native deaths due to white violence were relatively small, probably owing to clerical restraint of the military. After 1830, casualties increased as ranch expansion and Indian stock raids led to retaliatory incursions and slave raiding in the Central Valley. Although much of the conflict consisted of forays by private individuals, when Mexican forces launched punitive expeditions, casualties were extremely heavy. S. F. Cook calculates that in the Central Valley alone, there were approximately eighty military encounters between whites and Indians, resulting in roughly eight hundred Indian deaths. North of San Francisco Bay, where the northern fringe of white settlement interacted with large numbers of unconverted natives, casualties were even heavier. For example, in 1834 Mariano Vallejo led a campaign against the Satiyomi, resulting in the deaths of two hundred Indians and the capture of three hundred. Although Mexican casualties could be heavy, Vallejo reporting his own losses in a single three-hour battle as "six soldiers...killed and thirty-two of my veterans wounded, besides thirty Indian allies being taken prisoner and afterwards beheaded,"

the superiority of gunpowder weapons ensured that native casualties were far greater. As Cook concludes, "Among the wild tribes those which resisted (Mexican) incursion most stubbornly. . . suffered really appalling losses."¹⁷

The Californio campaign against Estanislao's Rebellion of 1828–29 demonstrates the gente de razón's reliance on attrition when engaging Indians. Estanislao, an alcalde from Mission San José, organized an Indian uprising after acquiring a pass to visit relatives in the interior. Fugitives from a number of missions joined him, and the territorial government ordered the army to crush the rebels. When the first expedition under Alférez José Sánchez arrived in May 1829, they found the Indians fortified in a thick wood, "very rough and more than a league in extent," on the Stanislaus River. Confident of their superior firepower, the Californios dismounted and entered the wood, only to have two direct assaults repulsed with the loss of three killed and seventeen wounded. The battle continued without result until the Mexicans withdrew, their troops low on powder and their only artillery piece disabled in an accident.

The territorial government dispatched a second expedition of more than one hundred men under the command of Lt. Mariano Vallejo a few weeks later. The unit was equipped with a new cannon and well provided with ammunition. Vallejo ordered the woods set on fire, an example of positional dislocation, and commenced a cavalry charge after seeing a number of rebels flee the burning grove. The insurgents escaped to another thicket near the village of Taguadames, where they threw up a stockade. The Californios deployed their cannon and fired into the fortification. Confident of the effectiveness of the artillery, they once more dismounted and advanced into the grove, only to become engaged in an hour of heavy fighting. Pressured by the soldiers, the cannon, and another fire, the Indians fled. A number of rebels were caught and some executed. The Californios, once again low on ammunition and with thirteen wounded, disengaged.¹⁸



General Andrés Pico

Andrés and Pío Pico, prominent southern dons who played important roles in the political disputes of the 1830s and 1840s as well as resistance to the American invasion, were the sons of the company corporal of the San Diego garrison. Andrés Pico's defeat of Stephen Watts Kearny's Army of the West at the Battle of San Pasqual in 1846 preserved the Mexicans' honor, but the geographic isolation of Alta California ensured that the Californios, much like the natives they oppressed, lacked the means to prevent defeat and eventual subjugation.

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Governor Pío Pico

Mexican officials counted Vallejo's expedition a success, although a number of rebels, including Estanislao, escaped. Yet the two actions on the Stanislaus River demonstrate that when confronting California natives, the gente de razón used their advantage in military mass, mercilessly assaulting native forces with musket and cannon fire until the ammunition ran out. Native-white warfare in California, even during the Mexican period, was anything but comic.¹⁹

COMIC OPERAS AND THE MORTALITY OF WAR

The Californios' campaigns against natives not only show the gente de razón's willingness to engage in lethal combat, but also their ability to exact losses when possessing an advantage in firepower. Yet, this same warfighting culture exhibited an almost laughable failure to inflict casualties when combat pitted gente de razón against gente de razón. What then, are we to make of the comic opera revolutions?

There were nine major campaigns in Alta California between 1829 and 1845. Three of the episodes, listed in Table 1, can be excluded because Californios were uninvolved or only minor participants.

Two engagements were army disputes and the third a mutiny by recently arrived colonists. Joaquín Solís and José María Herrera, who used the failure to pay the San Francisco and Monterey garrison as the catalyst for a revolt against Governor Echeandía in 1829. Echeandía found himself the target of a similar revolt three years later when Captain Agustín Zamórano led a small force of convicts against army units loyal to the central government. In 1835, the short-lived Híjar Rebellion occurred when the governor failed to distribute mission lands to colonists recently arrived from Sonora. Abandoned by Mexico City, the settlers seized Los Angeles. When the pueblo's inhabitants showed no interest in the Sonorans' demands, the rebellion disintegrated.²⁰

More significantly, the six campaigns presented in Table 2 were the result of Californio disputes with governors dispatched from Mexico City. Five of these conflicts took place between 1831 and 1838, when Alta California was in the throes of the political turmoil that culminated in Juan Alvarado's rebellion against centrist Governor Nicolás Gutiérrez in 1836. Of all the confrontations presented in Tables 1 and 2, only two episodes, Alvarado's 1837 operation to assert

Table 1
"Comic Opera" Conflicts Involving Army Garrisons or Colonists, 1829–45

| Year | Conflict | Type | Combat | Approx. # of Combatants | Casualties |
|------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 1827 | Solís-Herrera Revolt | Army Revolt | Battle of Santa Ynez | 100 | 0 |
| 1832 | Zamérano Revolt | Army Revolt | None | 125 | 0 |
| 1835 | Híjar Revolt | Colonist Revolt | None | 50 | 0 |

Tables 1 and 2 show nine major campaigns in Alta California between 1829 and 1845. Conflicts in Table 1 were uprisings in Mexican military garrisons or revolts by recently arrived colonists. Table 2 shows conflicts against military governors imposed by Spain. Only two—Alvarado's campaigns—pit Californio against Californio. While the casualties of the Californios were at face value negligible, the mortality rates of the most famous comic opera campaigns were comparable to those suffered by European armies throughout the Napoleonic Wars

his authority in southern California and the 1838 campaign to consolidate his position against a rival governor, primarily set Californio against Californio.

True to the traditional portrayal of military engagements in Mexican California, the casualties reflected in the above tables do appear extremely low, and in the estimation of some, even comical. Yet in spite of the rather unusual appearance of the small number of fatalities, high lethality battles such as Waterloo or Borodino, engagements made famous by the enormous number of participants killed, were actually rare occurrences in the history of warfare. More typical was Austerlitz, a battle in which the victorious French Army lost 1,305 men killed, or 2 percent of the total of 65,000 men engaged; or Salamanca, where the Duke of Wellington lost 388 men killed out of a total of 30,562 men engaged, or 1.3 percent. Even when adding the huge casualties suffered at such battles as Waterloo and Albuera, the average mortality rate for the British Army throughout the Napoleonic Wars was 3.3 percent.²¹

While the casualties of the Californios were at face value negligible, the mortality rates of the most famous comic opera campaigns were com-

parable to those suffered by European armies throughout the Napoleonic Wars. For example, although only one man was killed in Governor Victoria's tiny "army" at the First Battle of Cahuenga Pass, that single casualty represented 2 percent of the fifty loyalist soldiers present. Even at Second Cahuenga Pass, the 1845 battle that supposedly resulted in the deaths of one horse and one mule, the number of fatalities may have been consistent with Napoleonic norms. Mariano Vallejo contended that a Californio artillery round killed four of Governor Micheltorena's "cholos," while additional sources report that Alvarado's rebels killed one to "several" loyalist soldiers in Los Angeles prior to the governor's arrival in southern California. Therefore, if we make the conservative estimate that six members of Micheltorena's command of approximately four men were killed in the Second Cahuenga Campaign, that number represents a mortality rate of 1.5 percent, a figure comparable to the typical Napoleonic engagement.²²

Although the two battles at Cahuenga may have been more lethal than traditionally held, the *average* number of casualties suffered by participants in California's comic opera battles were

Table 2
"Comic Opera" Campaigns With Californios as Primary Participants, 1829-45

| Year | Conflict | Type | Combat | Approx. # of Combatants | Casualties |
|------|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1831 | Southerners and Military Garrison vs. Gov. Victoria | Political Rebellion | First Battle of Cahuenga Pass | 250 | 2 Killed Several Wounded |
| 1835 | Revolt Against Gov. Chico | Political Rebellion | None | 100 | 0 |
| 1836 | Alvarado's Revolt | Political Rebellion | None | 150 | 0 |
| 1837 | Alvarado's First Southern Campaign | Political Consolidation | First Battle of San Buenaventura | 400 | 1 Killed, Several Wounded |
| 1838 | Alvarado's Second Southern Campaign | Political Consolidation | Second Battle of San Buenaventura | 400 | 1 Killed, Several Wounded |
| 1845 | Revolt Against Micheltorena | Political Rebellion | Second Battle of Cahuenga Pass | 800 | "Several" Killed or Wounded |

still significantly lower than that experienced by Napoleonic armies. Even when discounting the revolts against Chico and Gutiérrez, disputes in which the governors surrendered before battle was joined, probably no more than ten participants were killed in four such campaigns involving roughly 1,850 men, for a combined mortality rate of .54 percent.

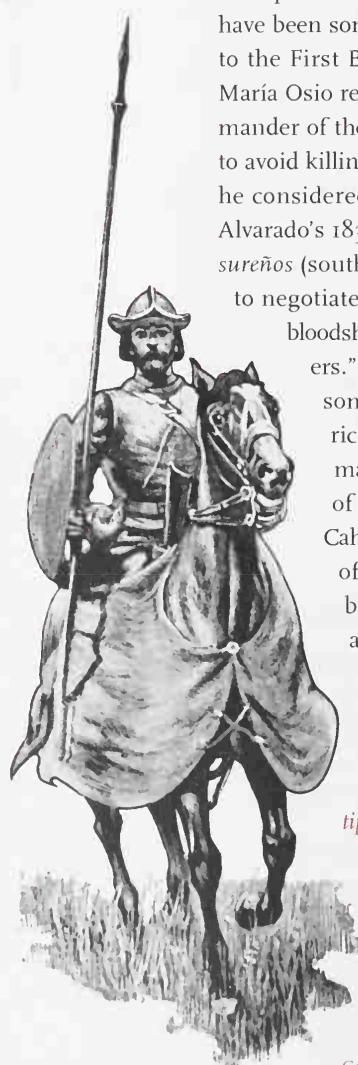
A traditional explanation for the low casualties of the comic operas was the fear among Californios that inter-white combat might result in the death of family members. Mariano Vallejo complained that his command consisted of "an army of unpaid relatives and friends" and there may have been some truth to such grievances. Prior to the First Battle of Cahuenga Pass, Antonio María Osio recalled that Captain Portilla, commander of the Los Angeles rebels, was anxious to avoid killing loyalist soldiers, many of whom he considered his "adopted sons," and during Alvarado's 1837 campaign against the south, the *sureños* (southerners) dispatched a commission to negotiate with Alvarado in order to "avoid bloodshed among fathers, sons, and brothers."

Yet despite the personal ties of some of the combatants, fear of fratricide appears to have played a minimal role in the nonlethal character of the comic operas. The meeting at Cahuenga Pass ended with the killing of two participants and the stabbing of Governor Victoria himself, and even Osio admits that during

the 1837 conflict, "no one withdrew his voluntary enlistment, not even out of respect for paternal, filial, or fraternal ties, because he did not want to provide the slightest grounds for reproach due to cowardice or not keeping his word."²³ More important, the employment of foreign mercenaries by both southerners and northerners in 1837 and 1838 belies the notion that the *gente de razón* would shrink from killing its own if necessary.²⁴

If familial ties did not play a significant role in the comic operas' low casualties, what did? Like all martial cultures, the Californios confronted "permanently operating" and "contingent" factors that influenced their military operations. Permanently operating factors include such things as terrain, distance, and climate. These timeless challenges effect the contingent considerations of troop numbers, training, quality of equipment, and supply. For the *gente de razón*, Alta California's geographic isolation from other settled areas of North America was the crucial permanently operating factor limiting the size and capabilities of their military forces. It was this logistical reality, and not any cultural qualms about killing, that primarily explains the small number of casualties in white-on-white conflicts.

In specific terms, when confronting non-Indian enemies, Californio armies lacked *mass*, and for aspiring revolutionaries, the recruitment of local militias, mercenaries, and civilians was an incessant challenge. There were never more than one thousand non-Indian males of military age in the territory throughout the period, while the Mexican Army deployed just four hundred men and twenty officers in the entire territory in 1830.²⁵ Spanish, and later, Mexican authorities attempted to compensate for their small numbers by the employment of Indian auxiliaries. Natives were generally used as scouts, but Mariano Vallejo employed Suisun warriors as combatants in a number of punitive campaigns against tribes on the northern frontier. Typically armed with bow and arrow, natives did not see widespread use in Californio disputes because of their limited value against



Soldado de Cuera. Armed with spear-tipped lances and protected by cowhide armor, "leather jacket soldiers" were Spanish frontier adaptations carried into the Mexican period. From a description by Zoeth Eldredge in The Beginnings of San Francisco (San Francisco: Z.S. Eldredge, 1912).

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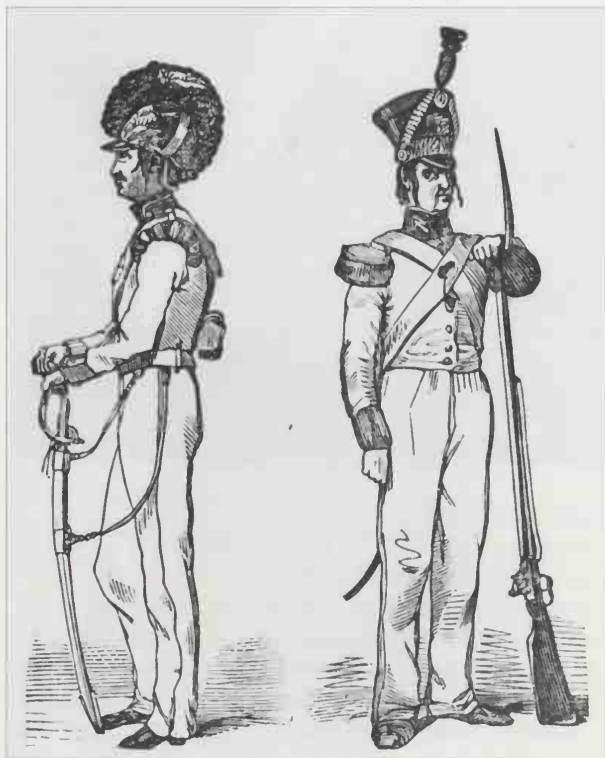
gunpowder adversaries, but also because public concern prevented the outfitting of Indians with European weapons. The territorial deputation's protest of Governor Echeandía's arming of natives with lances and horses while instructing them in rudimentary cavalry tactics to crush the Zamorano Revolt, as well as the defection of a number of Micheltorena's supporters because of John Sutter's arming of Indians in support of the governor, reveals the *gente de razón's* determination to maintain natives as an inferior military adversary.²⁶

Unwilling to arm the largest segment of Alta California's population, Californio armies only ranged from fifty to four hundred men, and the small number of combatants on one side or the other meant that in some cases, combat was never joined. The 1835 revolt against Governor Chico succeeded because the governor had at his disposal a total of eight infantrymen of dubious loyalty to support him against an armed mob, a rebellious deputation, and a lack of support from his subordinate officers. With no help coming from units commanded by Mariano Vallejo and Nicolás Gutiérrez, either because they were unwilling or occupied with Indian uprisings, the dejected governor fled to Mexico.²⁷

Alta California's geographic isolation not only resulted in armies of diminutive size, it also led to major supply problems. Units were plagued by chronic shortages of equipment and ammunition, and numerous military actions, from expeditions against Indians to the U.S.-Mexican War, were broken off because of a lack of gunpowder. It was in part this logistic reality that led Spanish and, later, Mexican officers to enhance or even replace the equipment of their frontier troops with local materials. The moniker "Leather Jacket Soldiers" originated from the use of the *cuera*, a vest inspired by native armor and made of cowhide. The *cuera* was complemented by the *adarga*, a shield woven from three layers of cowhide and fabricated by artisans at the missions. Locally made lances, up to ten feet in length and topped with metal blades, drew their origin from

medieval Spain and were ubiquitous weapons on the California frontier. Easier to maintain than Europe's heavy cavalry and reasonably effective against natives, hide-armored lancers were vulnerable when engaging an infantry line armed with gunpowder weapons.²⁸

Such adaptations could at least partially offset the tenuous logistical situation of cavalry on the northern frontier, but artillery units operating in Alta California were in an almost hopeless situation, in spite of the fact that the remnants of the



*Standard Mexican Cavalry and Infantry Uniforms. In practice members of the eclectic comic opera armies wore a hodgepodge of official uniforms and civilian clothing and carried a mixture of operable and inoperable equipment. From an illustration in Thomas Farnham, *The Early Days of California* (Philadelphia: J. E. Potter, 1862).*

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Manuel Micheltorena. Poor artillery, undisciplined soldiers, and the unreliable New Helvetia Army led by John Sutter cost Manuel Micheltorena the governorship in 1845. All three factors were typical of comic opera conflicts: armies lacked gunpowder and ammunition, militias were untrained, and engagements were sometimes fought in part by mercenaries.

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Spanish coastal defenses provided the gente de razón's tiny armies with artillery at a very high density. For example, the ratio of cannons to troops in Napoleon's Army du Nord during the Waterloo campaign was 3.3 guns per 1,000 men, while comic opera units possessed a similar or even higher ratio, with groups of 200 to 400 men armed with 1 to 3 guns.²⁹ In a meeting of such seemingly well-armed antagonists, the natural inclination of both sides was to increase the distance between the opposing lines, avoiding friendly losses while relying on the skills of artillery gunners to inflict enemy casualties. Such was not the case during the 1831 revolt that ended in the deaths of Romualdo Pacheco and José Avila,³¹ and the serious wounding of Governor Victoria. Neither loyalist nor rebel forces possessed cannons, both groups feeling free to close within small arms range.³⁰ Yet in most comic opera conflicts, one side or the other possessed artillery, and in opening the range to avoid enemy fire, the difficulty of gunnery also increased. However, artillery crews either lacked the quality ammunition or skills necessary to hit their targets.

Cannon balls were always a scarce commodity. Juan Alvarado's artillerymen began the 1836 revolt without a single artillery round while rebel gunners at the Second Battle of Cahuenga Pass compensated for their lack of solid shot with cobblestones found on the bed of the Los Angeles River. The famous retrieval of expended cannon balls in artillery duels was therefore not some lighthearted ritual, but simply a practical fix to a lack of ordnance.³¹ Yet even when artillery crews found shot to load into their pieces, they were confronted by the same shortage of powder that plagued infantry. But more serious for the long-range fire capabilities of the cannon, gunners often substituted high-quality powder with an unpredictable propellant manufactured at the missions and hence, Californio artillery rounds followed depressingly erratic trajectories. In September 1846 José Carrillo's artillerymen broke off from the retreating Americans at the Battle of San Pedro after a round from their single can-

non fell far short of the enemy column. The report of the gun was weak, and the powder was manufactured at Mission San Gabriel. When Stockton and Kearny's forces launched their campaign to recapture Los Angeles in January 1847, Americans at the Battle of San Gabriel reported that shots from the Californio gun line again fell short, the powder of such poor quality and the resulting fire so inaccurate that Mexican forces failed to prevent the American crossing of the San Gabriel River.³²

While the quality of ammunition may alone account for the "bloodless artillery duels," the lack of powder meant that few troops in California had proper training in handling cannon. The 1836 campaign against Governor Gutiérrez was only successful because Juan Alvarado relied on an "old veteran," identified by Mariano Vallejo as Artilleryman Balbino Romero, who was competent enough to land his single round near the governor's house at close range.³³ The bulk of Californio combatants lacked such talent, or even luck, and without live fire practice, the accuracy of artillery suffered. At the Second Battle of Cahuenga Pass, the three artillery pieces of Manuel Micheltorena's "cholo" army were supplied with shot and grape, the latter requiring expert handling of the fuses to ensure that the shells exploded directly over their targets. Yet in spite of the fact that the artillery caissons were for once well-stocked, loyalist gunners fired a total of 124 rounds without killing a single Californio. When Micheltorena's gun crews opened fire again the next morning, this time apparently with solid shot, the governor continued to be beset by the ineffectiveness of his artillerymen, who throughout a two-hour bombardment "could not aim straight and fired in such a way that the cannon balls rolled harmlessly away after landing far from where were located the three (rebel) cannon."³⁴ The importance of gunnery training and high-quality powder can be seen at the Battle of San Gabriel, when Robert Stockton, a trained naval gunner, took personal command of one of

the fieldpieces and destroyed a Californio cannon with a single shot.³⁵

The problem of effective gunnery was further aggravated by the fact that when taking artillery fire, Californios followed their instincts, dispersed, and took cover. This was the case at Second Cahuenga Pass, where the insurgents sheltered themselves from Micheltorena's cannonade in a ravine, as well as the sureño-norteño conflicts of 1837–38, where combatants turned structures into small forts. Indians took cover as well, and at battles such as Stanislaus River, natives attempted to nullify the effect of artillery by building stockades or occupying buildings. However, the Indian tactic was counter-productive because, unlike the Californios, bow and arrow armed natives took artillery fire at close range. Gunnery problems were minimized and the kinetic energy discharged by the impacting round shattered walls into lethal splinters. And unlike Indians, most Californio soldiers were mounted, and with their ability to disperse rapidly, cavalry was the most troublesome of artillery targets.³⁶

While the shortage of high-quality ammunition, deficiencies in gunnery training, and the mobile nature of Californio targets were important determinants in habitually poor artillery performance, the California coastal climate may have played a factor as well. The most effective Californio cannonade, the bombardment of American sailors and marines at the Battle of San Pedro, took place in September. By sheer coincidence, the conflicts that included artillery fire occurred during Alta California's rainy season, between the months of November and March, with the most serious cannonade, that of Second Cahuenga Pass, taking place in January. Although accurate weather reports are unavailable for the period, it is likely that the ground was moist during most if not all of these engagements, a condition that would seriously erode the "ricochet effect" that solid shot depended on for inflicting casualties.³⁷

Another reason for the low level of lethality in comic opera revolutions had much to do with the nature of centers of gravity during the politi-

cal disputes that raged in Alta California during the Mexican period. The small white population and the undeveloped state of the territory's infrastructure meant that geographic centers of gravity played a secondary role. Although the possession of Monterey or Los Angeles was of some value in determining the outcome of a campaign, particularly when they served as the capital and ensured control of customs revenue, in most of the comic opera revolutions, Alta California's centers of gravity were typically composed of persons: that of the Mexican governor on one side and a few rebel leaders on the other. When these centers of gravity were captured, wounded, or lost heart, the rationale for the conflict evaporated.

The identification of persons as centers of gravity was intensified by early nineteenth-century styles of command and the emergence of the Californios as a regional identity after 1821. Until the advent of such impersonal communications systems as the telegraph, military commanders placed themselves close to the action to follow the course of the battle and ensure that orders were carried out. Officers sometimes commanded in a heroic style, entering the fray with sword and pistol in hand, as was the case with Governor Victoria, who was seriously wounded at the First Battle of Cahuenga Pass.³⁸ Similar risk-taking helped legitimate authority in Mexican culture, but it was indispensable in Alta California where, as Lisbeth Haas stresses, "a pretense to aristocracy was not uncommon for the Spanish/mestizo population that came to identify themselves as Californios and Spanish Californians." Affectations toward the blue blood of Spain and the traditions set by the Franciscan Fathers justified domination of the territory's Indian population and political defiance toward Mexico City. The resultant political culture demanded that leaders be present for battle and make themselves visible to the enemy.³⁹ The linkage of social status with behavior on the battlefield is best illustrated by Pío Pico, no soldier by his own admittance, who berated José Castro as a simple "vaquero" for shedding his uniform during the artillery exchange at Second Cahuenga Pass.⁴⁰

The permanently operating factors of Alta California then ensured that European-style armies operating in the territory were crippled by a small number of combatants, persistent supply problems, and chronically ineffective artillery. Because the Californios' military shortcomings made attrition warfare against non-Indian adversaries highly problematic, and because widespread destruction was made unnecessary by the personalized nature of the region's centers of gravity, conflicts were characterized by a lower mortality rate than those experienced by other European style armies during the period. However, the Californios proved themselves highly adaptable. Lacking the resources necessary to wage effective attrition warfare against non-Indian opponents, the Californios compensated for their deficiencies by the ubiquitous use of cavalry in wide-ranging campaigns of maneuver, a style of war that was the final factor in the low casualties of the comic operas.

CALIFORNIOS AND MANEUVER

The Californios' selective shift from attrition to maneuver tactics when facing non-Indian opponents appears to have originated from a practical comprehension of what is known in military physics as the *momentum equation*.⁴¹ Because the gente de razón's tiny armies were pitifully lacking in mass when engaging other Western style forces, they were inferior in regards to their potential *momentum*, or the military effectiveness of their units. But momentum is the product of mass and velocity:

$$M = mv$$

As a practical matter then, if the gente de razón could not achieve momentum through the mass of their military forces, they could make up for it by increasing their velocity in combat. Indeed, the Californios' primary compensation for their lack of military mass was the horse. The use of cavalry had a long tradition on the Spanish frontier, where mounted units served as the shock troops of the conquistadors. The great horse

herds that appeared in Alta California after 1769, the subsequent development of a ranch economy capable of supplying a wealth of experienced riders and superb mounts for military operations, and the vast distances between population centers made the widespread use of cavalry in the territory a foregone conclusion.⁴² A solution to the challenges of geography and their relative lack of firepower, the potential of Californio mounted units were not just apparent during the U.S.-Mexican War, at such victories as San Pasqual and San Pedro, but also during the political-military disputes of the Mexican Era.

THE NORTH-SOUTH CONFLICT: 1836-38

The wounding of Manuel Victoria in 1831 and the surrender of Governor Chico in 1835 preclude any in-depth analysis of these early comic operas, but Juan Alvarado's 1836 rebellion and his subsequent victories in southern California were the result of a consistent use of maneuver to bring about the defeat of opponents with a minimum of bloodshed.

Juan Bautista Alvarado began his revolt against Governor Nicolás Gutiérrez because of his distaste for centrist politics as well as a personal dispute regarding the misappropriation of customs house funds. Alvarado was joined by a num-

1) December, 1837: Sureños support governorship of Carlos Carrillo. Alvarado decides to send forces south.

2) March, 1838: *Preemption*. Presidio of Santa Barbara captured. Barbareños prevented from joining Angeleno insurgents.

MAP 1: ALVARADO'S SECOND SOUTHERN CAMPAIGN, 1837-1838

3) March, 1838: *Deception*. Sureños prepare to defend Mission San Buenaventura. Norteños approach at night and maneuver cannon onto high ground. Castro launches surprise attack, capturing bulk of Sureño force.

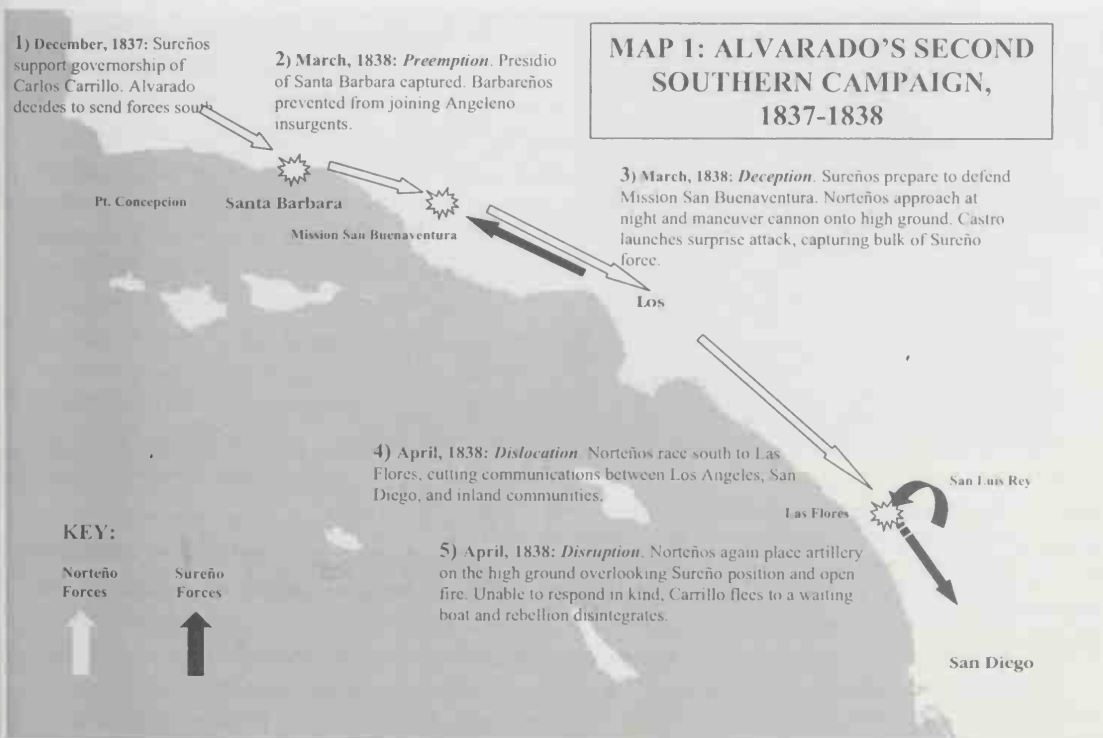
4) April, 1838: *Dislocation*. Norteños race south to Las Flores, cutting communications between Los Angeles, San Diego, and inland communities.

5) April, 1838: *Disruption*. Norteños again place artillery on the high ground overlooking Sureño position and open fire. Unable to respond in kind, Carrillo flees to a waiting boat and rebellion disintegrates.

KEY:

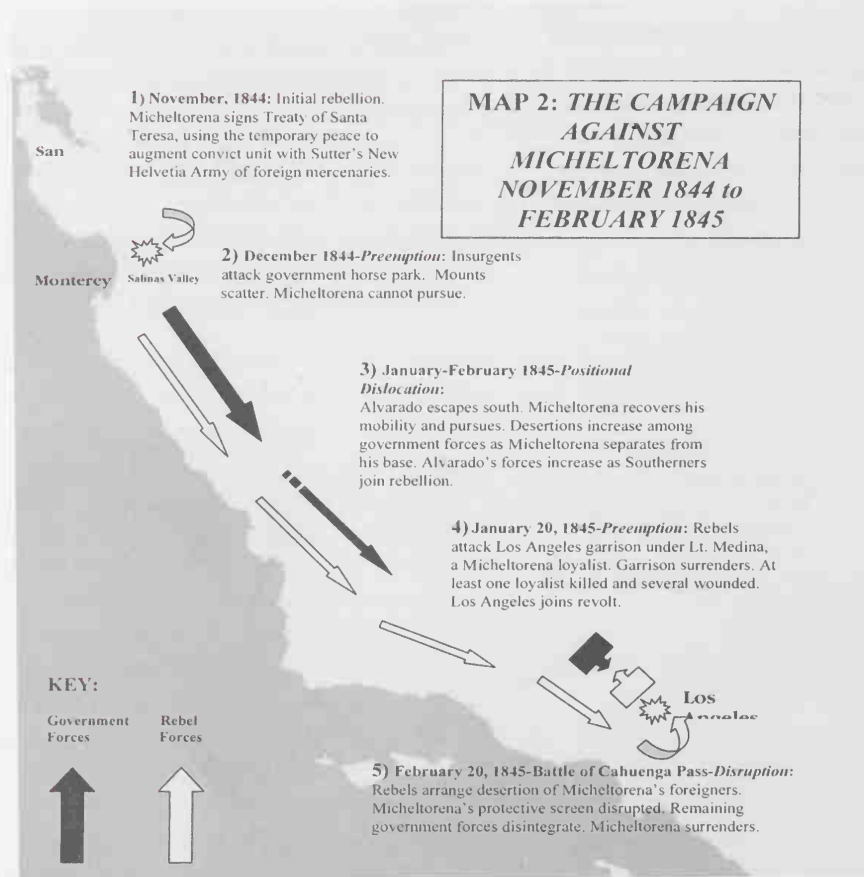
Norteño Forces

Sureño Forces



Alvarado's second summer campaign, 1837-38. Juan Alvarado's 1836 rebellion and his subsequent victories in southern California were the result of a consistent use of maneuver to bring about the defeat of opponents with a minimum of bloodshed.

MAP BY THE AUTHOR. CALIFORNIA COASTAL OUTLINE COPIED FROM RAND McNALLY'S NEW MILLENNIUM WORLD ATLAS (1999)



The campaign against Micheltorena, November 1844 to February 1845. The final chapter in the rebellion against Micheltorena was the Second Battle of Cahuenga Pass, two days of fighting that ended with the governor's surrender. The battle has long been considered the prototypical comic opera, for total casualties amounted to the deaths of one horse and one mule.

MAP BY THE AUTHOR. CALIFORNIA COASTAL OUTLINE COPIED FROM RAND MCNALLY'S NEW MILLENNIUM WORLD ATLAS (1999)

ber of Bay Area ranchers, the militia of Sonoma and San José, as well as Isaac Graham's well-armed American frontiersmen. Deception was the key to this eclectic army's first success. Although the Californio rebels were short of muskets, they had plenty of mounts and a large cache of old, unserviceable weapons. Provided they still had stock and barrel, the insurgents carried the otherwise worthless muskets to convince government troops that they opposed a well-armed force.

The ill-equipped rebels marched to Monterey, where Alvarado placed his men among pine groves at a considerable distance from the presidio, ordering the blowing of bugles and the lighting of numerous campfires so that Gutiérrez would overestimate his opponent's mass. The rebels deployed their lone artillery piece on high ground dominating the governor's house in the hopes of frightening, if not outright killing Gutiérrez, for the governor was the isolated agent of Mexican federal authority and hence the center of gravity for the centrist position in Alta California. The single, well-placed cannon shot at the square where Gutiérrez conferred with his officers convinced the governor that he faced an attack from a superior force if he did not surrender, although Alvarado's gunners had just expended their only round, a solid ball accidentally left behind by loyalist forces. The cannon had also been brought for appearances.⁴³

The most serious confrontation among the Californios themselves involved the southerners' refusal to recognize Alvarado's authority once the latter deported Gutiérrez and declared the territory's independence. In response, Alvarado gathered an army of roughly seventy Californios and Isaac Graham's American mercenaries, all under the command of José Castro. The sureños countered by forming their own force of about one hundred men. Determined to seize Los Angeles, the center of resistance and in this case a geographic center of gravity, Alvarado marched one force south while he sent another detach-



By the time of the U.S.-Mexican War, the comic opera revolutions had left the Californios highly adept at military operations requiring extensive movement. In 1846, at both the battles of San Pasqual and San Pedro, Californio cavalry soundly defeated similarly sized U.S. forces.

"THE CHARGE OF THE CABALIEROS," AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE BATTLE OF SAN PASQUAL BY W. FRANCIS, IN ZOETH SKINNER ELDREDGE, *THE BEGINNINGS OF SAN FRANCISCO* (SAN FRANCISCO: Z. S. ELDREDGE, 1912), TICOR/PIERCE COLLECTION, CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LIBRARIES



Although Stephen Watts Kearny was known as the "Father of the U.S. Cavalry" in his lifetime, Andrés Pico shattered his forces at the Battle of San Pasqual in 1846. Kearny united the survivors with naval forces in San Diego and in 1847, took Los Angeles. He was briefly military governor of California and died in Veracruz, Mexico, in 1848.

COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

ment to Point Concepción in a hired boat. Once his forces were united at La Purísima, Alvarado quickly took the presidio of Santa Bárbara and augmented his own force with two cannons found there, as well as a few local sympathizers.⁴⁴

Alvarado next sent a message to the ayuntamiento of Los Angeles proposing negotiations. The Angelenos dispatched a commission that included Antonio María Osio and José Sepúlveda. In the middle of the talks at San Buenaventura, Alvarado forced the commission to hand over their instructions, revealing the ayuntamiento's desire to avoid a military confrontation. Emboldened by the disclosure, Alvarado sent an emissary to inform the pueblo's inhabitants that his army "carried no commissary," and would not hesitate to lay the sureños' fields waste. The threat was effective. The sureños "had a wholesome dread of Graham's riflemen," and Osio later described Graham as someone who knew "how to use a rifle," and his compatriots as "wicked." With the previous seizure of the commission, the Angelenos required little convincing, although a final stand was made at Mission San Fernando, where the governor's cannon fired a shot at the church. Possessing no artillery of their own, the defending sureños fled. Alvarado's army entered the pueblo without resistance a few days later.⁴⁵

When the southerners renewed their defiance in 1837 and supported an attempt to install José Carrillo as governor, Alvarado repeated his earlier performance, sending a force of loyalists and mercenaries from Monterey, once more under José Castro, to end sureño resistance. Castro moved rapidly, sending messengers ahead with orders to prepare fresh horses to enable the rapid movement of his army down El Camino Real and prevent the juncture of Angeleno forces with their Barbareño allies.⁴⁶ Santa Bárbara was taken easily, and the Angelenos fell back to San Buenaventura. Castro appeared soon after, capturing the sureños' horses and using cover of night to maneuver an eight pounder over rocky terrain onto the high ground of El Rincón. At dawn the

norteños opened fire on the mission church, taking the seventy sureños sleeping inside by surprise. Although the attack failed to inflict a single casualty and a Texas mercenary shot down one of Castro's gunners, without artillery of their own and trapped inside the mission, the norteño assault on San Buenaventura, as Pío Pico lamented, "made prisoners, the major part of our force that had been stationed there."⁴⁷

After San Buenaventura, Alvarado arrived, and the governor and his general entered Los Angeles. Remnants of Carrillo's supporters reformed at Las Flores, an Indian village north of San Diego, where they barricaded themselves inside a number of homes and a large corral. Alvarado advanced toward the village, hoping to capture Carrillo himself, as well as to sever communications between Los Angeles, San Diego, and a few rebels to the east at San Luis Rey. The norteños seized the high ground once more, using movement to dominate the village and cut off the defenders from neighboring wells. Virtually surrounded and his army short of water, José Carrillo, the *raison d'être* for the campaign and the sureño center of gravity, fled to Baja California, and the remaining insurgents surrendered. Alvarado paroled them after they promised to refrain from additional mutiny, his victories of 1836–38 assured by swift movement, the preemption of unified resistance and the seizure of dominant ground, the continuous use of deception and the disruption of his enemy's centers of gravity.⁴⁸

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST MICHELTORENA:

844–45

Alvarado's campaigns of 1837 and 1838 illustrate the nonlethal but decisive character of white-on-white military encounters in Alta California, yet the rebellion against Mexican Governor Micheltorena is the best example of the Californios' grasp of the principal concepts of maneuver.

Personally liked by a number of dons and flowing with good intentions, Manuel Micheltorena's dispatch to California with a force of three hundred convict soldiers was the basis for the 1844–

45 rebellion. The upheavals of the 1830s taught the federal government that territorial governors required military support if they were to survive the Californios' constant political mischief, but with U.S.-Mexican tensions high, Mexico City needed its best troops on the Texas frontier. With no logistical support, Micheltorena's "cholo army" earned the disgust of Alta California's citizenry through their requisitioning, if not outright stealing, of food and supplies. That was enough for Californios used to opposing the "tyranny" of appointed governors.

On November 16, 1844, about one hundred men under Jesús Pico, Antonio Chávez, and Manuel Castro opened the rebellion by attacking Mission San Juan Bautista, where a large cache of government munitions were stored. Ensuring the adequate arming of their own force, they then raided the government horse park, driving the mounts to the Salinas Valley and detaching a small unit to ensure that the animals did not return. This opening move was a classic example of preemption, robbing Micheltorena's army of the mobility necessary for effective operations before the conflict began.⁴⁹

Faced with another challenge to federal rule, Micheltorena gathered supporters and new mounts to crush the opposition, now forming under Juan Alvarado and José Castro. In late November, government and rebel forces clashed just south of San José. Rebel horsemen rode around government troops in an attempt to frighten Micheltorena into capitulation. The strategy apparently worked, for in the resulting Treaty of Santa Teresa the governor promised to deport the hated convict soldiers. Micheltorena was, however, only buying time until he could rally additional reinforcements. The governor gave John Sutter the power to grant land to foreigners in an attempt to recruit American settlers to his cause. Micheltorena's composite force, made up of his own convicts and Sutter's largely American "New Helvetia Army" soon outnumbered Alvarado's insurgents by four to one.

Confronted with a superior force, Alvarado decided to move the base of his rebellion to Los Angeles. There he surprised the army garrison, and several loyalist soldiers were killed or wounded. Faced with the possibility of a full-scale rebellion, Micheltorena pursued. In a single stroke, the rebels moved Micheltorena and Sutter away from their base of operations and avoided fighting the government on its terms. Alvarado and Castro's dash to Los Angeles in January 1845 was thus a superb example of positional dislocation, the act of rendering an enemy's strength irrelevant by removing them from the decisive point of conflict. The preemptive horse raid ensured the completion of the movement, for Sutter's pursuit was held up by the shortage of mounts. Eventually, the New Helvetia Army procured an adequate number of horses, and a force of 150 men with Sutter in command, marched to Los Angeles with Micheltorena and a convict detachment, their combined strength numbering about 400 combatants.⁵⁰

The final chapter in the rebellion against Micheltorena was the Second Battle of Cahuenga Pass, two days of fighting that ended with the governor's surrender. The battle has long been considered the prototypical comic opera, for total casualties amounted to the deaths of one horse and one mule, although the traditional narrative ignores the unfortunate victims of Alvarado's prior attack on the Los Angeles garrison or Vallejo's assertion that a number of cholos were killed in the artillery duel.⁵¹

Arriving in Los Angeles, Alvarado and Castro evened the odds by joining their forces with sureños, who themselves possessed a hearty distaste for the cholos. Together, they prepared to resist an expected assault. With little following among the Californios themselves, Micheltorena, like his predecessors, was the loyalist center of gravity. However, unlike previous conflicts, a relatively large force protected the governor. As the most effective element of that screen was the New Helvetia Army, peeling away Sutter's mercenaries was the only way to disrupt the loyalist center of gravity.

First, the insurgents planted rumors among captured foreigners that Americans residing south of the Tehachapi mountains were joining the rebels massing in Los Angeles, counting on Micheltorena's defeat and the stripping of Sutter's power to grant land to his allies. Partially through the efforts of John Marsh, the deception found its way to the foreign contingent of Micheltorena's force, and roughly thirty-five Americans deserted. Such fabrications, as well as the long march south, depleted Sutter's New Helvetia Army. By the time government forces reached Cahuenga Pass in mid-February 1846, Sutter had only fifty of his original 150 riflemen left.⁵²

Fifty marksmen were still a dangerous force by the standards of war in Mexican California. The insurgents took up positions at the crest of Cahuenga Pass, protecting the path to Los Angeles. Micheltorena's army formed up at the base of the hill. On February 20, 1846, the governor's artillery began its pathetic performance. In the middle of the bombardment, Pío Pico, elected the new governor of California by the Los Angeles *diputación*, sent a message to the foreign mercenaries, decreeing that should they surrender, they would receive full pardons, be allowed to remain on land awarded them by Micheltorena, and be granted legal title should they adopt Mexican citizenship.⁵³

Sutter's probable irritation at the lackluster performance of government artillery was certainly dwarfed by the spectacle of his New Helvetia Army laying down their rifles to cast votes on the question of surrender. As the cannonade continued, most of the foreigners left the field, and Sutter himself was captured. With the disintegration of the New Helvetia Army, Micheltorena, the loyalist center of gravity, was left only with his cholos to defend him. The following day the governor attempted to maneuver the remnants of his army around the rebels in hopes of seizing Los Angeles and salvaging the battle. But the Californios detected the move, matched the governor's march, and blocked the path to the capital. With no hope of victory, Micheltorena surren-

dered. The preemption of an early government attack, the positional dislocation of the New Helvetia Army, the evaporation of the mercenary component of the loyalist army and the resulting capture of Micheltorena himself were the keys to the outcome of the campaign.⁵⁴

CONCLUSION

Rather than a cultural curiosity, the comic opera revolutions of Mexican California were classic applications of maneuver warfare. The handicaps placed on military units in the region, the widespread availability of horses, and the personalized nature of the combatants' centers of gravity resulted in low levels of lethality during white-on-white combat and forced the Californios to rely on maneuver as a principle means of war when engaging similarly armed opponents. It was only when fighting poorly armed natives that the gente de razón possessed such an advantage in the mass of their military units that they could inflict significant casualties on their enemies.

Viewed in such a way, the military campaigns of the comic opera revolutions bear a striking continuity with the Californios' performance during the U.S.-Mexican War. The norteños' victory at the Battle of Natividad, the triumph of José María Flores's "Flying Artillery" at the Battle of San Pedro, and Andrés Pico's shattering of Stephen Watts Kearny's Army of the West at the Battle of San Pasqual should therefore not surprise us. The result of Natividad was owed to the exceptional horsemanship of the Californios, San Pedro to the lack of American mobility achieved by Carrillo's preemptive scattering of horses, and San Pasqual to the perfect timing of Pico's counter-charge.⁵⁵ The Californios, in their estimation at least, preserved much of their honor during the events of 1846 and 1847, but the geographic isolation of Alta California ensured that the gente de razón, much like the natives they oppressed, lacked the means to prevent defeat and eventual subjugation. Yet the fleeting victories of 1846, and the tactical experience needed to achieve them, did not arise in a vacuum. The political disputes that plagued the territory between 1821 and 1845, and

the "bloodless marches and countermarches" that were their mark, proved an exceptional training ground. Whether amusing or not, the "comic opera revolutions" prepared the Californios to meet the initial chapter of their own conquest story and deserves a re-evaluation of their place in California history.⁵⁶

Robert Phelps received his Ph.D. in U.S. history from the University of California, Riverside, and is currently an Associate Professor of History at California State University, East Bay, where he specializes in the history of California and the American West.

His writings have appeared in a number of books and historical journals, including *Rooted in Barbarous Soil*, part of the *California History Sesquicentennial Series*. He is a past recipient of the Doyce B. Nunis Award for the best article produced on the history of southern California. His most recent works include photographic histories of the city of Hayward and the community of Castro Valley, California.

Dr. Phelps is currently working on a book-length study of the early years of the model city of Torrance entitled: *Torrance: Corporate Efficiency and City Planning in Open Shop Los Angeles*.

NOTES

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¹This present study is a companion piece to John Koegel, "Crossing Borders: Mexicana, Tejana, and Chicana Musicians in the United States and Mexico," in Walter Aaron Clark, ed. *From Tejano to Tango: Latin American Popular Music* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 97-125.

²*Ethnic Recordings in America: A Neglected Heritage* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, 1982); Emilio García Riera, *Historia documental del cine mexicano* (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 1992–1997, 18 vols.), García Riera, *México visto por el cine extranjero* (Guadalajara: Ediciones Era, 1987, 6 vols.); Juan S. Garrido, *Historia de la música popular en México, 1876–1973* (Mexico City: Editorial Extemporáneos, 1981, 2nd ed.); Claes af Geijerstam, *Popular Music in Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1976); Nicolás Kanellos, *A History of Hispanic Theater: Origins to 1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990); Steven Loza, *Barrio Rhythm: Mexican American Music in Los Angeles* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Yolanda Moreno Rivas, *Historia de la música popular mexicana* (Mexico City: Alianza Editorial Mexicana, 1989, 2nd ed.); John Storm Roberts, *The Latin Tinge: The Impact of Latin American Music on the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, 2nd ed.); Richard K. Spottswood, *Ethnic Music on Records: A Discography of Ethnic Recordings Produced in the United States, 1893–1942. Vol. 4: Spanish, Portuguese, Philippine, Basque* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990); Janet Sturman, Zarzuela: *Spanish Operetta, American Stage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000). The detailed documentary record of Mexican popular music in this period remains to be established, however, and a definitive history of this musical tradition has yet to be written. The materials for such a comprehensive history are found in large quantity in recorded sound collections and film archives, newspapers and periodicals, sheet music and photograph collections, the internet (especially eBay and digital archives), other documentary sources, and, importantly, in public memory, in the United States and Mexico (and elsewhere in Latin America and Spain). A wide range of sources is utilized

here to illuminate the study of popular and art music in a multi-faceted approach, particularly from the perspective of the performer.

³Frontera Collection: <http://digital.library.ucla.edu/frontera/>; accessed March 8, 2006.

⁴*The Bronze Screen: 100 Hundred Years of the Latino Image in Hollywood*; produced, directed, and written by Susan Racho and Nancy de Los Santos (Chicago: Questar, 2002, DVD).

⁵See: <http://www.art.uh.edu/recovery/index.aspx>; accessed July 1, 2006.

⁶In his seminal *Historia documental del cine mexicano*, Emilio García Riera chronicles the history of the Mexican sound film from 1929 to 1976, and in his *México visto por el cine extranjero* he charts an amazing number of references to Mexico and its people in American and European motion pictures from 1894 to 1988.

⁷Juan B. Heinink and Robert G. Dickson, *Cita en Hollywood: Antología de las películas norteamericanas habladas en castellano* (Bilbao: Ediciones Mensajero, 1990); Luis Reyes and Peter Rubie, *Hispanics in Hollywood: A Celebration of 100 Years in Film and Television* (Hollywood: Lone Eagle Publishing Company, 2000); Charles Ramírez Berg, *Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion, and Resistance* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002); Ana M. López, "Are All Latins from Manhattan?: Hollywood, Ethnography, and Cultural Colonialism," in Lester D. Friedman, ed., *Unspeakable Images: Ethnicity and the American Cinema* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 404-424.

⁸Novarro performed as a singer in five MGM musicals of the 1930s, and his recording of "The Pagan Love Song" was used in the soundtrack for his silent film *The Pagan* of 1929 (the film had pre-recorded music but no dialogue). However, he only made a few commercial recordings, including, for example, Spanish composer José Padilla's famous song "El Relicario" (The Reliquary) and French operetta composer André Messager's song "Long Ago in Alcalá" (HMV B-8426; recorded in 1936); Messager's song was re-released on the LP album *A Nostalgia Trip to the Stars, 1920–1950, Vol. 1* (Mouth- Evergreen Records MES 7030).

⁹That Novarro was a romantic figure for many moviegoers in the United States and Latin America can be seen in the Cuban son (a popular and folkloristic song type) "La niña del cine" (The Cinema Girl), recorded by the Trio de Moya in Havana, circa 1929–1930 (Brunswick 40858). In the first verse of this humorous song a girl says to her mother: "Mamá, me voy al cine, al cine me voy, mamá. Me gusta Ramón Novarro porque el besa muy sabroso" (Mama, I'm going to the picture show. I like Ramón Novarro because he gives hot kisses"). This song is included in the compact disc set *A History of Early Cuban Trova, 1900–1940* (Alma Criolla 803), released by Zac Salem.

¹⁰Allen R. Ellenberger, *Ramon Novarro: A Biography of the Silent Film Idol, 1899–1968* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1999). The best study of Novarro's important career and tragic death is André Soares, *Beyond Paradise: The Life of Ramón Novarro* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002). Soares's meticulously documented and fascinating book sensitively treats Novarro's homosexuality and its direct relationship on his acting and singing career, as well as his brutal murder.

¹¹Del Río recorded the song "Ramona" to promote the 1928 film of the same name directed by Edwin Carewe (re-released on the LP album *Stars of the Silver Screen, 1929–1930*, RCA Victor LPV-538). On the reverse side of the original 78-rpm record (Victor 4053) is del Río's performance of Mexican songwriter Tato Nacho's (Ignacio Fernández Esperón) song "Ya va cayendo" (It's Falling).

¹²Joanne Herschfield, *The Invention of Dolores del Río* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); David Ramón, *Dolores del Río* (Mexico City: Editorial Clio, 1997, 3 vols.).

¹³On the Mexican musical review, see *El país de las tandas: Teatro de Revista, 1900–1940* (Mexico City: Museo Nacional de Culturas Populares, 1987, 3rd ed.); Jorge Miranda, ed., *Del rancho al Bataclán: Cancionero de teatro de revista, 1900–1940* (Mexico City: Museo Nacional de Culturas Nacionales, 1984); Armando María y Campos, *El teatro de género chico en la revolución mexicana* (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, Dirección General de Publicaciones, 1996, reprint of 1956 ed.).

⁴“Todavía en junio de este año, se conten-aba con ganar el aplauso de las transnocha-ores que acudían a las tandas del teatro-rico, en la capital azteca. . . . Cualquiera-ía, al apreciar su rápido ascenso, que todo- l chiste consiste en tomar billete hacia- hollywood, presentarse ante la cámara y- nifrar. Pero quienes sabemos lo que signi- ca la lucha en los estudios, debemos con-esar que triunfo como el de la niña Lupe, on únicos en la historia del arte . . .” Cited- n Paco Ignacio Taibo I, *Gloria y achaques- el espectáculo en México, 1900–1929* (Mexico- ity: Ediciones Leega/Júcar, 1988), 113.

⁵For example, Vélez sang Irving Berlin’s- ong “Where Is the Song of Songs for Me”- n D. W. Griffith’s early sound film *The Lady- f the Pavements* (1929); she also recorded- e song separately (Victor 21932-A). (This- as re-released on the LP albums *Stars of- he Silver Screen, 1929–1930*, RCA Victor- PV-538; and *The Vintage Irving Berlin*, New- orld Records LP album NW 238.) Vélez- lso recorded “Mi Amado” (My Beloved)- om the film *The Wolf Song of 1929* (Victor- 1932-B).

⁶A notable exception was Vélez’s appear- in Fernando de Fuentes’ 1938 evoca- ve Mexican film *La Zandunga*.

⁷Gabriel Ramírez, *Lupe Vélez: La mexicana- ue escupía fuego* (Mexico City: Cineteca- acional, 1986).

⁸José Octavio Sosa, *Ópera en Bellas Artes:- ina cronología analítica, 1934–1999* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de- ellas Artes, 1999), 129.

⁹Enriqueta de Parodi, *Alfonso Ortiz Tirado- Hermosillo: Instituto Sonorense de Cultura*,- 996, 2nd ed.).

¹⁰Robert L. Brubaker, “130 Years of Opera- n Chicago,” *Chicago History* 8, no. 3 (Fall- 979): 156–169; Claudia Cassidy, *Lyric Opera- f Chicago* (Chicago: Lyric Opera of Chicago,- 979).

¹¹Michael V. Pisani, “A Kapustnik in the- merican Opera House: Modernism and- okofiev’s *Love for Three Oranges*,” *The- usical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (Winter 1999):- 87–115.

¹²Arthur Bloomfield, *50 Years of the San- rancisco Opera* (San Francisco: San Fran- sco Book Company, 1972).

²³Robert C. Marsh, “The Ravinia Opera, 1912–1931,” *The Opera Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (Spring 1997): 97–106; Marsh, “The Annals of the Ravinia Opera, Part 3: 1922–1926,” *The Opera Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (Autumn 1997): 79–101; Marsh, “The Annals of the Ravinia Opera, Part 4: 1927–1931,” *The Opera Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (Winter 1997/1998): 57–82.

²⁴Mojica’s principal and secondary operatic roles included, among others, *Aida* (Verdi); Radames, Messenger; *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Rossini); Almaviva; *Boris Godunov* (Musorgsky); Prince Shuysky; *Carmen* (Georges Bizet); Remendado; *Falstaff* (Verdi); Fenton; *Faust* (Gounod); Faust; *Die Fledermaus* (Johann Strauss); Prince Orlofsky; *Gianni Schicchi* (Giacomo Puccini); Rinuccio; *L’heure espagnole* (Maurice Ravel); Gonzalve; *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame* (Massenet); Monk Poet; *Louise* (Gustave Charpentier); Noctambulist, King of Fools, Song Writer; *The Love for Three Oranges* (Prokofiev); Prince; *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Donizetti); Lord Arturo Bucklaw, Normanno; *Madama Butterfly* (Puccini); Goro, Yamadori, Pinkerton; *Manon* (Massenet); Guillot, Des Grieux; *Morgana* (Alejandro Cuevas); Beppo; *Le nozze di Figaro* (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart); Don Basilio; *Otello* (Verdi); Cassio, Roderigo; *I Pagliacci* (Ruggiero Leoncavallo); Beppe, Tonio, Silvio, Canio; *Parsifal* (Richard Wagner); First Knight; *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Debussy); Pelléas; *Rigoletto* (Verdi); Borsa, Duke of Mantua; *Roméo et Juliette* (Gounod); Tybalt; *Salome* (Richard Strauss); Narraboth; *Thaïs* (Massenet); Nicias; *Il Trovatore* (Verdi); Manrico; *La vida breve* (Manuel de Falla); Paco; *A Witch of Salem* (Charles Wakefield Cadman); Deacon.

²⁵Ronald I. Davis, *Opera in Chicago* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1966), 154.

²⁶Cassidy, *Lyric Opera of Chicago*, 120, 166, 174, 179.

²⁷“Ecco ridente in cielo” (Edison 82343-R), recorded in 1925; “Una furtiva lagrima” (Edison 82344-R), recorded in 1926; re-released on *Three Edison Tenors: Giuseppe Anselmi, Alessandro Bonci, José Mojica* (Marston CD 51002-2).

²⁸The prominent American baritone Lawrence Tibbett (1896–1960) appeared in a number of early film musicals, including *The Rogue Song* (1930), with Laurel and Hardy; *Cuban Love Song* (1931), with Lupe Vélez; and *Metropolitan* (1935). Soprano

Grace Moore (1898–1947) started her career on the Broadway musical stage and later moved to the Metropolitan Opera. She also appeared in early film musicals, including *A Lady’s Morals* (1930), a film biography of Swedish singer Jenny Lind; and in the smash hit *One Night of Love* (1934). Tibbett and Moore appeared together in the first of MGM’s two film versions of Sigmund Romberg’s famous operetta *The New Moon* (1930).

²⁹In *El precio de un beso* (alternate titles: *Un beso apasionado*, *Un beso de pasión*) José Saavedra (Mojica) incites the local people to revolt against an unjust tax. It was shown at the Cine Palacio, Mexico City, beginning September 4, 1930, for two weeks (María Luisa Amador and Jorge Ayala Blanco, *Cartelera Cinematográfica, 1930–1939* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Filmoteca Nacional, 1980), 26). For details and plot descriptions of Mojica’s Hollywood films, see Alan Gevinson, ed., *American Film Institute Catalog. Within Our Gates: Ethnicity in American Feature Films, 1911–1960* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

³⁰In *Cuando el amor rie*, Mojica plays Emilio Rodríguez de Viana, a “congenial but mysterious trainer of wild horses” on the ranch of Don José Alvarado, in Mexican California.

³¹Prince Alexis, disguised as Lieutenant Eric Sandro (Mojica), falls in love with the beautiful Yvette (Conchita Montenegro) in *Hay que casar al príncipe*.

³²In *La ley del harem* (alternate titles: *En los brazos de ella*, *El hijo del desierto*), Al-Hadi, an Arabian prince (Mojica), finds true love with Renée Duval, a French woman (Carmen Larrabeiti).

³³Mojica played a Basque fisherman in *Mi último amor* (alternate titles: *Momento loco*, *Su último amor*).

³⁴Mojica played Dick Turpin, a bandit in eighteenth-century England, in *El caballero de la noche* (alternate title: *Tu amor o la vida*).

³⁵In *El rey de los gitanos* (alternate title: *El zingaro vagabundo*) Mojica played Karol, King of the Gypsies. It was shown at the Cines Teresa, Granat, Venecia, Parisiana, and Rivoli in Mexico City beginning March 3, 1934 for one week (Amador and Ayala Blanco, *Cartelera Cinematográfica, 1930–1939*, 102).

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³⁶In *La melodía prohibida* (alternate title: *La canción prohibida*), a "South Sea Island Romance," Mojica plays Kalu, an innocent native boy alternately seduced by a woman, modern music, and urban life. It played at the Cines Teresa, Granat, Venecia, Parisiana, and Rivoli in Mexico City beginning June 23, 1934 for one week. See Juan B. Heinink y Robert G. Dickson, "La melodía prohibida: Jardiel Poncela en Hollywood," Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes: <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/>; accessed July 20, 2006.

³⁷In *La cruz y la espada* (alternate title: *Oro de California*), Mojica played the role of a Franciscan in Alta California. It was shown at the Cines Goya, Teresa, Odeón, Rialto, Monumental, Granat, Edén, Venecia, Parisiana, and Rivoli in Mexico City beginning May 3, 1934 for one week (Amador and Ayala Blanco, *Cartelera Cinematográfica*, 1930-1939, 107).

³⁸*Un capitán de Cosacos* (alternate titles: *Entre dos fuegos*, *El centauro*, *Cosacos*) played at the Cine Palacio in Mexico City beginning on February 7, 1935 for one week. Mojica appeared as Captain Sergio Danikoff, a Russian officer exiled to Siberia.

³⁹The plot of *Las fronteras del amor* (alternate titles: *Love Flight*, *En alas de amor*, *El vuelo de amor*) very slightly resembles Mojica's own life in that the world-weary opera singer Miguel Segovia (Mojica) returns to his ranch in Mexico. After a series of adventures, Segovia marries the American beauty Alice Harrison (Rosita Moreno).

⁴⁰These two films are in the UCLA Film Archives. Though most of his Fox films appear to be lost, a number of Mojica's later films survive, including *El capitán aventurero* (1939), *Melodías de América* (Melodies of America) (1941), *El Pórtico de la Gloria* (The Portico of Glory) (1953), *Seguiré tus pasos* (I Will Follow Your Footsteps) (1966), as well as his film biography, *Yo, pecador* (1959).

⁴¹Juan Aguilar was active in the music scene in Los Angeles, and among his many other activities, he worked on the scores for films with a Mexican connection, including Sergei Eisenstein's *Thunder Over Mexico* (1931) and *Viva, Villa* (1934). He is profiled in Robert Stevenson, "Local Music History Research in Los Angeles Area Libraries: Part I," *Inter-American Music Review* 10, no. 1 (Fall-Winter 1988): 19-38. The Juan Aguilar Collection

of musical manuscripts is at the Department of Special Collections, Music Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

⁴²Isabel Morse Jones, "City Spirit Revealed in Concerts," *Los Angeles Times*, June 6, 1931, A7.

⁴³Penella was the composer of the famous Spanish opera *El gato montés* (The Wildcat) (1916) and the revista *La musas latinas* (The Latin Muses) (1912), both of which were performed in Mexico and the United States. For a detailed plot summary of *Don Gil de Alcalá*, which zarzuela expert Christopher Webber believes is Penella's most important musical score, see Christopher Webber, *The Zarzuela Companion* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002): 185-190.

⁴⁴Eduardo de la Vega Alfaro, Arcady Boytler (1893-1965) *Pioneros del cine sonoro II* (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, Centro de Investigación Cinematográfica, 1992), 98-100, 120-121, 174-177. *El capitán aventurero* is available on videotape and DVD from Spanish Multimedia: <http://www.spanishmultimedia.com/>; accessed January 10, 2006.

⁴⁵*Pantallas y Escenarios*, March 15, 1939, cited in de la Vega Alfaro, Arcady Boytler, 99.

⁴⁶"Las producciones mexicanas hechas en Hollywood no pueden competir con las que aquí se hacen. Allí gastan mucho dinero, cuentan con grandes elementos materiales y técnicos, disponen de incontables recursos; pero no tienen suficientes colaboradores, adecuados y eficaces. . . . que para poder competir con nuestra producción, necesitarán en Hollywood un fuerte núcleo de personas verdaderamente capacitadas y conocedoras de nuestros tipos, de nuestras costumbres, de nuestra psicología, de nuestra indumentaria y demás complementos." Cited in Vega Alfaro, Arcady Boytler, 99.

⁴⁷Some of the recent compact disc re-releases of Mojica's recordings include: *José Mojica: Historia de éxitos* (Orfeón 10645, Mexican release), *Grandes voces del mundo: Alfredo Kraus, José Mojica* (Orfeón 13239; Mexican release), *Three Edison Tenors: Giuseppe Anselmi, Alessandro Bonci, José Mojica* (Marston: 51002-2, British release), *José Mojica Tenor* (1897-1974), *Gabriella Besanzoni Contralto* (1890-1962) (Club 99 CD 99-23; United States release), *José Mojica: Júrame* (LBACD 031; Brazilian release).

⁴⁸Carlos Monsiváis, Salvador Novo: *Lo marginal en el centro* (Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 2000), 36-37. For an invaluable collection of Monsiváis' writings on popular culture, including essays about Dolores del Río, Tin Tan, and Cantinflas, see Carlos Monsiváis; John Kraniauskas, ed., *Mexican Postcards* (London: Verso, 1997).

⁴⁹"José Mojica Faunesca," photo clipping from an unidentified Spanish-language film magazine, ca. 1930; José Mojica Clipping File, Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research; University of Wisconsin, Madison. Earlier, Ramón Navarro, in publicity shots for *Ben Hur* (MGM, 1925), had also posed in such situations. See Soares, *Beyond Paradise: The Life of Ramón Navarro*.

⁵⁰Mick LaSalle, *Dangerous Men: Pre-Code Hollywood and the Birth of the Modern Man* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press, 2002).

⁵¹Carlos Monsiváis, "Pagés Llergo defendió la tolerancia y auspició la libertad de expresión," *Proceso*, Mexico City, January 5, 1990; cited in Olivier Debrosse, *Fuga mexicana: Un recorrido por la fotografía en México* (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994), 33.

⁵²Salvador Novo, *La estatua de sal* (Mexico City: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1998), with a prologue by Carlos Monsiváis.

⁵³Mojica was a member of a religious order at the time that he completed *Yo, pecador*. Therefore, to publish his autography, he was first required to obtain the permission of his Franciscan Provincial Minister in Arequipa, Peru, who gave it the stamp of *Imprimi Potest* ("it can be printed"); it was then sent to the archdiocesan censor in Mexico City, who gave it the stamp of *Nihil Obstat* ("nothing stands in the way"); lastly it was sent for approval to the Archbishop of Mexico, who gave it the stamp of *Imprimatur* ("let it be printed").

⁵⁴A book about Mojica's conversion to a religious life was issued to celebrate his ordination: Luis Spota, *José Mojica, hombre, artista, y fraile* (Mexico City: Prometeo, 1944).

⁵⁵José Mojica, *Yo, pecador* (Mexico City: Editorial Jus, 1956); translated as, *I, A Sinner* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1963).

⁶The film version of *Yo, pecador* was based on Mojica's autobiography, and though certain periods in his life were stressed over others, it did not shy away from presenting ruthless details of his life. For example, his status as an *hijo natural* (illegitimate child) was discretely woven into the plot. It seems likely that the vogue in the 1950s for Hollywood operatic film biographies is echoed in the Mexican film version of *Yo, pecador*. MGM's *The Great Caruso* of 1951, starring tenor Mario Lanza, is an example of this.) Interestingly, Mojica appeared briefly as himself at the very end of the film, when he is shown celebrating Mass. *Yo pecador* is currently available on DVD and videotape. See: <http://www.spanishmultimedia.com/>; accessed March 8, 2006.

⁷Fray Gonzalo de Jesús, O.F.M., *Fray José J. Mojica, O.F.M.: Mi guía y mi estrella* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1975); José Diez Martín, *Memorias del ídolo José Mojica* (Madrid, 1975); Ernesto Arauco Travezán, *José Mojica: Mundo, arte, y espíritu* (Lima: Editorial Bruño, 1999).

⁸See the entire issue of the profusely illustrated Mexican magazine *Somos* devoted to Tito Guízar and Esther Fernández, *Isis Alla en el Rancho Grande* co-star (vol. 11, no. 01, November 1, 2000).

⁹For a fine pictorial overview of the history of the Mexican cinema during its Golden Age, see Carlos Monsiváis, *Rostros del cine mexicano* (Mexico City: América Arte Editores, 1997, 2nd ed.); Carlos Monsiváis and Carlos Bonfil, *A través del espejo: El cine mexicano y su público* (Mexico City: Ediciones El Milagro, 1994).

¹⁰Tito Guízar: *Época de oro de la radio* (Instituto De Conservación y Recuperación Musical, compact disc, ICREM-012, Mexican release), *Tito Guízar, Yo canto para tí—El Jalán-Cantor de Latinoamérica* (Alma Latina, compact disc, ALCD-042, Spanish release, produced 1996); *Tito Guízar, Pedro Infante: Peerless 70 años, 1933-2003, Una historia musical* (Peerless, compact disc, 60558-2, Mexican release, produced 2003).

¹¹Charles Ramírez Berg, *Carteles de la época de oro del cine mexicano/Poster Art from the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema* (Zapopan: Archivo Fílmico Agrañáñez, Universidad de Guadalajara, Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía), 13.

⁶²Jorge Calderón González, *Nosotros, la música, y el cine* (Xalapa: Universidad Veracruzana, 1997), 97-99.

⁶³Rafael Herrera Robinsón's 1904 Edison cylinder recording of the pre-revolutionary era "Corrido de Jesús Leal" has been released on the CD set *The Mexican Revolution: Corridos* (Arhoolie CD 7041-44). It is probably one of the earliest commercial recordings made in Mexico. The Mexican duet of Jesús Abrego and Leopoldo Picazo made a number of recordings for the Edison and Victor companies. Some remained in vogue for many years after their initial release. For example, several of their acoustic-process Victor discs from the turn of the century were listed as available for sale in the United States and Latin America as late as 1928 (*Catálogo de Discos Victor, 1928-1929*; author's collection). Abrego y Picazo's song and comic skit "La rancherita" (The Little Rancher Girl) (recorded in 1905), is included on the CD collection *Duetos Mexicanos*, issued in 1995 by the Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Fonográficos (AMEF T-44-04). Their version of the "Corrido de Marcario Romero" is included in *The Mexican Revolution: Corridos* Arhoolie CD anthology. Also see the Cylinder Preservation and Digitization Project of the University of California, Santa Barbara: <http://cylinders.library.ucsb.edu>; accessed July 1, 2006.

⁶⁴The first recordings of Mexican mariachi music (twenty-one *sones abajeños*—lowland tunes) were made in Mexico by the Cuarteto Coculense (from Cocula, Jalisco) in the fall of 1908 and spring of 1909, reportedly for the Columbia, Victor, and Edison companies. Some of these have been released on the compact disc *Cuarteto Coculense: The Very First Mariachi Recordings, 1908-1909, "Mexico's Pioneer Mariachis, Vol. 4"* (Arhoolie CD 7036). Also see Hiram Dordelly Núñez, ed., *Cancionero del Cuarteto Coculense: Sonos abajeños* (Mexico City: Centro Nacional de Investigación, Documentación e Información Musical "Carlos Chávez," 2004).

⁶⁵John Koegel, "Canciones del país: Mexican Musical Life in California after the Gold Rush," *California History* 78, no. 3 (Fall 1999): 160-187, 215-219; Koegel, "Manuel Y. Ferrer and Miguel S. Arévalo: Premier Guitarist-Composers in Nineteenth-Century California," *Inter-American Music Review* 16,

no. 2 (Spring-Summer 2000): 45-66; Koegel, "Mexican and Mexican-American Musical Life in Southern California, 1850-1900," and "Calendar of Southern California Amusements (1852-1897) Designed for the Spanish-Speaking Public," *Inter-American Music Review* 13, no. 2 (Spring-Summer 1993): 111-143.

⁶⁶Mexican-born composer, guitarist, and teacher Manuel Y. Ferrer (1832-1904) was an active and important figure on the musical scene in San Francisco from his arrival there circa 1850 until his death. He was the founder of a musical dynasty, and many of his children followed him into musical careers, including his daughter Eugenia. His *Compositions and Arrangements for Guitar* (San Francisco, CA: Matthias Gray, 1882) is an important nineteenth-century anthology of guitar music. The International Guitar Research Archives (Ronald Purcell, Director) at California State University, Northridge, is the major repository for Manuel Y. Ferrer's music. IGRA Website: <http://library.csun.edu/igra/>; accessed March 9, 2006.

⁶⁷Spottswood, *Ethnic Music on Records, 1869-1870*; Paul Charosh, *Berliner Gramophone Records: American Issues, 1892-1900* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995).

⁶⁸Proof of their dissemination in Latin America is the interesting fact that in 1999, a century after their first release, a number of Ferrer's recordings turned up for sale in Uruguay on eBay. They were sold to a collector in Argentina.

⁶⁹For many evocative photographs of María Conesa's theatrical performances, including as the character of "La gatita blanca" in the zarzuela of the same name, see Colección Mexicana de Tarjetas Postales Antiguas, Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez: <http://bivir.uacj.mx/Postales>; accessed March 1, 2006.

⁷⁰*El Imparcial* (Mexico City), November 11, 1907.

⁷¹Sergio López Sánchez and Julieta Rivas Guerrero, *Esperanza Iris: La tiple de hierro* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 2002).

⁷²Conesa was exiled from Mexico for a time because of her alleged involvement with

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General José Álvarez, who was charged with smuggling. This was widely publicized in the national and international press. See, for example, "Mexico Arrests Maria Conesa," *New York Times*, June 2, 1928, 10.

⁷³See *Del rancho al Bataclán and El país del las tandas* for song lyrics with political content sung by María Conesa.

⁷⁴*El imparcial* (Mexico City), January 5 1909; cited in Taibo, *Gloria y achaques del espectáculo en México, 1900-1929*, 47.

⁷⁵Spottswood, *Ethnic Music on Records, 1785-1786*. A number of Conesa's recordings were re-released on the Mexican LP album *María Conesa: La gatita blanca* (Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Fonográficos, AMEF-03, released 1986). Six spicy couplets recorded by Conesa in 1913-1915 (in French and Spanish) were re-released in Spain in the compact disc set *El arte del cuplé: Primeros éxitos de la canción española moderna, 1906-1926* by Blue Moon (BMCD 7791, 4 discs).

⁷⁶"Webb Singing Pictures," Internet Movie Database: <http://www.imdb.com>; accessed March 1, 2004; "Caruso Hears His Voice," *New York Times*, January 15, 1917, 7.

⁷⁷*Refugiados en Madrid* is available on videotape from the Agradónceh Film Archive; <http://www.mexfilmarchive.com/>; accessed March 1, 2006.

⁷⁸Enrique Alonso, *María Conesa* (Mexico City: Océano, 1987); Alberto Dallal, *La danza en México: Tercera parte: La danza escénica popular, 1877-1930* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, 1995); Pablo Dueñas, *Las divas en el teatro de revista mexicano* (Mexico City: Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Fonográficos, 1994); María y Campos, *El teatro de género chico en la revolución mexicana*; Enrique Olavarría y Ferrari, *Reseña histórica del teatro en México, 1538-1911* (Mexico: Porrúa, 1961, 5 vols.), vol. 5; Maya Ramos Smith, *Teatro musical y danza en el México de la belle époque (1867-1910)* (Mexico City: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Grupo Editorial Gaceta, 1995).

⁷⁹"María es un nombre de la Madre del Ser más amado. Han habido otras Marías históricas, como María Antonieta, la trágica Reina de Francia, María Estuardo, Reina de Escocia, María Curie, científica, investigadora, des-

cubridora del Ra (Radio), descubridora de los rayos "X", María Callas, la eminente y admirada soprano italiana, María la gran compositora de canciones bellas e inolvidables, María Grever, La inolvidable "Gatita Blanca," María Conesa, deleite de los caballeros de la época revolucionaria de México a principios del siglo XX. A la única que yo he conocido es a nuestra María Félix, por eso es María de todas las Marías." Juan Gabriel Website; <http://www.juangabriel.com.mx/ladonia.html>; accessed March 9, 2006.

⁸⁰Some of Carmen García Cornejo's operatic activities are chronicled in Edgar Ceballos, *La ópera, 1901-1925: La historia de México a través del teatro* (Mexico City: Escenología and Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 2002).

⁸¹Spottswood, *Ethnic Music on Records*, 1896-1897.

⁸²Guillermo A. Posadas, arr., *Canciones mexicanas: Colección Carmen García Cornejo* (New York: Mexican Song Publishing Company, 1919); a possibly unique copy is in the Music Library, University of California, Berkeley. This collection may also have been published in Mexico, since Juan S. Garrido mentions it in his important study *Historia de la música popular en México*, 46.

⁸³Posadas was an orchestra conductor, radio music director, arranger, and composer. His waltzes "Abandonado" (Abandoned) and "Sufrimiento de amor" (Sufferings of Love) were well known in Mexico and the United States. He also composed the film scores to the 1933 Mexican films *El tigre de Yautepec* (The Tiger of Yautepec) and *El prisionero trece* (Prisoner 13). In the 1930s, Posadas directed the musical program *Calendario Artístico*, broadcast on the Mexico City radio station XEW. His photograph appears in Pablo Dueñas H., *Bolero: Historia documental del bolero mexicano* (Mexico City: Asociación Mexicana de Estudios Fonográficos, 1993, 2nd ed.), 166.

⁸⁴Rodolfo Hoyos, interview, March 26, 1974, Los Angeles, California; cited in Félix F. Gutiérrez and Jorge Reina Schement, *Spanish-Language Radio in the Southwestern United States* (Austin: University of Texas at Austin, Center for Mexican American Studies, 1979), 6, 16.

⁸⁵Hoyos's many solo recordings show his wide range and demonstrate his impressive

vocal abilities. A few of these include: "La bayadera-Fox," (The Bayadere) (Victor 78199), "La leyenda del beso" (The Legend of the Kiss) (Victor 78201), "Miel de tus besos" (The Honey of Your Kisses) (Victor 78277), "Si pudiera olvidar" (If I Could Forget) (Victor 78584), and "Yo traigo la vida en un hilo" (My Life is on a Thread) (Victor 78273). He also recorded with José Mojica for Edison and Victor, with Guty Cárdenas for Columbia, and with Enrique Herrera Vega and Carlos Mejía for Victor (Spottswood, *Ethnic Music on Records*, 1739, 1840, 1964-1965, 1999, 2088-2089, 2162, 2330). Some of Hoyos's many recordings are available on the Frontera Collection website.

⁸⁶See Kanellos, *A History of Hispanic Theater* for discussion of Hoyos's extensive theatrical activities in Los Angeles and New York.

⁸⁷Some of these important recordings have been re-released on the compact disc *La voz y guitarra de Guty Cárdenas, 1928-1932: El ruiseñor yucateco* (Alma Criolla Records, CD ACCD 801; United States release); also see Álvaro Vega, coordinator, and Enrique Martín, ed., *Guty Cárdenas: Cancionero* (Mérida: Instituto de Cultura de Yucatán, Centro Regional de Investigación, Documentación y Difusión Musicales "Gerónimo Baquero Foster," 2006), with accompanying compact disc.

⁸⁸Pavel Granados, *XEW: 70 años en el aire* (Mexico City: Editorial Clio, 2000).

⁸⁹Garrido, *Historia de la música popular en México*.

⁹⁰Perches Enríquez's waltz "Ofelia" and polka "Alicia" were recorded by the José Perches Enríquez Orquesta in San Francisco in 1928 and released on the Okeh label. They are included in the compact disc collection *Orquestas Típicas: Pioneer Mexican-American Recording Orchestras (1926-1938)* Mexican-American Border Music, Vol. 4 (Arhoolie CD 7017).

⁹¹Spottswood, *Ethnic Music on Records*, 2047, 2189-2190. Chris Strachwitz, owner of Arhoolie Records, has released a number of early recordings by Pedro J. González and Los Madrugadores (without Perches Enríquez) on *Los Madrugadores*, Texas-Mexican Border

Music, Vol. 18 (Folklyric LP 9036); and *Pedro J. González and Los Madrugadores*, Historic Mexican-American Music, Vol. 13 (Arhoolie CD 7035). The documentary film about Pedro J. González's life, *Ballad of an Unsung Hero*, was released in 1983, and a film biography, *Break of Dawn/Rompe el alba*, in 1988. For information about González, see Cecilia Rasmussen, *LA Unconventional: The Men and Women Who Did LA Their Way* (Los Angeles: Times Books, 1998), 114-16.

¹²These 1931 operetta excerpts have been released on compact disc in Spain on the Blue Moon label (Serie lírica): *El conde de Luxemburgo* (BMCD 7531). *El soldado de chocolate* (BMCD 7533). See <http://www.blue-noon.es/>; accessed March 9, 2006.

¹³See John Koegel, "Músicos mexicanos y cubanos en Nueva York, c. 1880-1920," *Historia Mexicana*, forthcoming.

¹⁴Some other important Mexican musicians active in California and the United States between circa 1910 and 1950 include Manuel S. Acuña: orchestral director, bandleader, and songwriter; Fanny Anitúa: opera singer and recitalist (contralto); Juan Arvizu: singer (also a classically-trained tenor) and actor; Lorenzo Barcelata: songwriter and film actor; Margarita Cueto: singer (soprano); Carlos Curti: orchestra director (of the first Orquesta Típica), composer, and xylophone and mandolin soloist; Beatriz Escalona, known as "La Chata Noloescá," a popular singer and comic; Ángel Esquivel: opera singer (baritone); Pedro J. González: popular singer and songwriter; Eduardo González Jiménez: theater composer and music director; María Grever: songwriter and singer; Pepe Guízar: popular singer and songwriter; Hermanas Águila: popular singers; Hermanos Areu: popular singers, actors, and comics; Pedro Infante: popular singer and film actor; Agustín Lara: composer, popular singer, pianist, and film actor; Miguel Lerdo de Tejada: composer and music director (of the Orquesta Típica Lerdo); José Limón: opera singer (tenor); Felipe Llera: popular singer (also a classically-trained baritone) and songwriter; Carlos Mejía: opera singer (tenor); Celia Montalván: popular singer, and stage and film actress; Jorge Negrete: popular singer and film actor; Lucha Reyes: popular singer and film actress; Mario Palavera: singer (tenor) and composer; Trío Garnica Ascencio: popular singers; and

Pedro Vargas: popular singer (also a classically-trained tenor) and film actor.

"WOODY SEZ": WOODY GUTHRIE, THE PEOPLE'S DAILY WORLD, AND INDIGENOUS RADICALISM, BY RONALD BRILEY, PP 30-43

¹For Hal Ashby's film *Bound for Glory* see Vincent Canby, "Bound for Glory," *The New York Times*, 6 December 1976, 46; Judith Crist, "Bound for Glory," *Saturday Review*, 11 December 1976, 78; and Janet Maslin, "Bound for Glory," *Newsweek*, 13 December 1976, 104.

²Ed Cray, *Ramblin' Man: The Life and Times of Woody Guthrie* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004), 138-140; Joe Klein, *Woody Guthrie: A Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1980), 113-135; Dorothy Ray Healey and Maurice Isserman, *California Red: A Life in the American Communist Party* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); and Harvey Klehr, *The Heyday of American Communism: The Depression Decade* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

³Bryan K. Garman, *A Race of Singers: Whittman's Working-Class Hero from Guthrie to Springsteen* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 169-170; and Woody Guthrie, *Bound For Glory* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1943), 399.

⁴Ronald D. Cohen, "Woody the Red?," in Robert Santelli and Emily Davidson, eds., *Hard Travelin': The Life and Legacy of Woody Guthrie* (Hanover, New Hampshire: Wesleyan University Press, 1999), 150.

⁵James R. Green, *Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), xiii and 368; Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003); Klein, *Woody Guthrie*, 125; "Jesus Christ Was a Man," in Woody Guthrie, Alan Lomax, and Pete Seeger, *Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People* (New York: Oak Publications, 1967), 336-337; and Dave Marsh and Harold Leventhal, eds., *Pastures of Plenty: Woody Guthrie, The Unpublished Writings of an American Folk Hero* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1992), 35.

⁶Harry Menig, "Woody Guthrie: The Okla-

homa Years, 1912-1929," in Davis D. Joyce, "An Oklahoma I Had Never Seen Before": *Alternative Views of Oklahoma History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 162-190.

⁷"So Long It's Been Good to Know You," in Guthrie, Lomax, and Seeger, *Hard Hitting Songs*, 226-227.

⁸Moses Asch, ed., *American Folksong: Woody Guthrie* (New York: Oak Publications, 1961), 22-23.

⁹Cray, *Ramblin' Man*, 126-132.

¹⁰"Tom Mooney Is Free," in Guthrie, Lomax, and Seeger, *Hard Hitting Songs*, 356; Richard H. Frost, *The Mooney Case* (Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 1968); and Ed Robbin, *Woody Guthrie and Me* (Berkeley, California: Lancaster-Miller Publications, 1979), 30-33.

¹¹Woody Guthrie, *Woody Sez* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1975); Marsh and Leventhal, eds., *Pastures of Plenty*, 163; Paul Richards, "People's World," in Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle, and Dan Georgakas, *Encyclopedia of the American Left* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 573-574; and "Woody Sez," *People's Daily World* (PDW), 17 June 1939, 4.

¹²"Woody Sez: A New Columnist Introduces Himself," PDW, 12 May 1939, 4. To maintain the flavor of Guthrie's writing, the misspellings and grammar employed by Guthrie are maintained.

¹³"Woody Sez," PDW, 18 May 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 19 May 1939, 4.

¹⁴"Woody Sez: Migratious Workers Take Lots of Abuse," PDW, 23 May 1939, 4.

¹⁵"Woody Sez: House," PDW, 31 May 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 1 June 1939, 4; and "Pretty Boy Floyd," Asch, ed., *American Folksong*, 27.

¹⁶"Woody Sez," PDW, 3 June 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 6 June 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 19 June 1939, 4.

¹⁷"Woody Sez," PDW, 23 June 1939, 4.

¹⁸"Woody Sez," PDW, 24 June 1939, 4; Woody Guthrie, "Roving Reporter Covers Hunger by a Dam Site," PDW, 27 June 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 28 June 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 3 July 1939, 4.

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¹⁹"Woody Sez," PDW, 7 July 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 12 July 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 11 August 1939, 4.

²⁰"Woody Sez," PDW, 17 July 1939, 4; on James Leech see Harvey Klehr, *The Heyday of American Communism*, 463; James R. Green, *Grass Roots Socialism*, 173; Klein, Guthrie, 125; and "Jesus Christ Was a Man," in Guthrie, Lomax, and Seeger, *Hard Hitting Songs*, 336-337.

²¹"Woody Sez," PDW, 3 August 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 4 August 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 7 August 1939, 4; and Charles P. Larrowe, *Harry Bridges: The Rise and Fall of Radical Labor in the United States* (Westport, Connecticut: Lawrence Hill & Co., 1977).

²²"Woody Sez," PDW, 31 July 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 6 September 1939, 4.

²³"Woody Sez," PDW, 15 August 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 27 October 1939, 4.

²⁴"Woody Sez," PDW, 12 September 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 15 September 1939, 4.

²⁵"Woody Sez," PDW, 22 September 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 26 September 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 27 September 1939, 4; and Maurice Isserman, *Which Side Were You On? The American Communist Party During the Second World War* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1982).

²⁶"Woody Sez," PDW, 6 October 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 20 November 1939, 4.

²⁷"Woody Sez," PDW, 14 November 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 22 November 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 30 November 1939, 4.

²⁸"Woody Sez," PDW, 18 October 1939, 4; "Woody Sez," PDW, 1 December 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 5 December 1939, 4.

²⁹"Woody Sez," PDW, 10 October 1939, 4; and "Woody Sez," PDW, 26 October 1939, 4.

³⁰"Woody Sez," PDW, 14 December 1939, 4.

³¹Marsh and Leventhal, eds., *Pastures of Plenty*, 149.

³²David R. Shumway, "Your Land: The Lost Legacy of Woody Guthrie," in Santilli and Davidson, eds., *Hard Travelin'*, 157.

ON COMIC OPERA REVOLUTIONS: MANEUVER THEORY AND THE ART OF WAR IN MEXICAN CALIFORNIA, 1821-1845, BY ROBERT PHELPS, PP 44-63

¹Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-Speaking Californians, 1846-1890*, with a new forward by Ramón A. Gutiérrez (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 5.

²James J. Rawls and Walton Bean, *California: An Interpretive History*, 8th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 59.

³In explaining the performance of southern Californians in their military dealings with the territory's northern communities, Bancroft wrote that the sureños were "destined to defeat, for Santa Bárbara when not hostile was lukewarm, San Diego if eloquent was not warlike, and the arribeño leaders, instead of being annihilated by the patriotic plans and pronunciamientos of their opponents, showed an alarming tendency to use actual force in the play at war." Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft: History of California*, Vol. III, 1825-1840 (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1885), 629-630. For Rawls and Bean's view that it was fear of killing family members that accounted for the low lethality of the comic operas, see Rawls and Bean, *California*, 59. George Tays gives a fine account of the politics and military movements surrounding the comic operas, but fails to analyze Californio warfighting practices and the reasons for the low number of white casualties in these encounters. See George Tays, *Revolutionary California: The Political History of California From 1820 to 1848* (Berkeley: University of California Microfilm, 1934), 752-763.

⁴Sun Tsu, *The Art of War*, ed. by James Clavell (New York: Delacorte Press, 1983), 15.

⁵In this section I borrow heavily from Robert Leonhard, whose 1991 *The Art of Maneuver* is considered one of the best analyses of maneuver warfare. See Robert Leonhard, *The Art of Maneuver: Maneuver Warfare Theory and AirLand Battle* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1994). For additional works on the concept of maneuver, see William S. Lind, *Maneuver Warfare Handbook* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985); Steven T. Ross, *Napoleon and Maneuver Warfare*. (Colorado Springs: U.S. Air Force Academy, 1985); and Richard E. Simpkin, *Race to the*

Swift: Thoughts on Twenty-first Century Warfare, with a forward by Donn A. Starry (London: Brassey's Defense, 1985).

⁶Leonhard, *The Art of Maneuver*, 13-15, 19.

⁷*Ibid.*, 27-35.

⁸*Ibid.*, 30-31.

⁹*Ibid.*, 61-66.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 20-24, 61-73, 73-76.

¹¹On cholos: Although "cholo" has a variety of definitions, in this case the Californios used the term to identify persons considered to be of inferior racial background and social standing. On cultural factors in human warfare, see John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 3-46; and R. Brian Ferguson, ed., *Warfare, Culture, and Environment* (Orlando, FLA: Academic Press, 1984). On the nonlethal nature of primitive warfare, see Keegan, *The Mask of Command* (New York: Penguin, 1987), 8-11; Ross Hassig, "Aztec Flower Wars," *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History* IX (Autumn, 1996), 8-20. For general studies of primitive warfare, also see Jonathan Haas, ed., *The Anthropology of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Raymond C. Kelley, *Warless Societies and the Origin of War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000); Harry Holbert Turney-High, *Primitive War, Its Practice and Concepts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1949); and William Tulio Divale, *Warfare in Primitive Societies: A Select Bibliography* (Los Angeles: Society for the Study of Armament and Disarmament, California State College, Los Angeles).

¹²For Alvarado's family background, see Robert Ryal Miller, *Juan Alvarado: Governor of California* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 5-6. Also see Juan B. Alvarado, *Vignettes of Early California. Childhood Reminiscences of Juan B. Alvarado*, trans. John H.R. Polt (San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1982), 17-18, 33-38.

¹³For Vallejo's early years, see Platón M.G. Vallejo, *Memories of the Vallejos: New Light on the History. Before and After "the Gringo" Came*. No pagination. Available at the California State Library, the book is a collection of reproductions from a series of articles that ran in the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin* in January and February 1914. Also see

Myrtle M. McKittrick, *Vallejo: Son of California* (Portland, OR: Binfords & Mort, 1944), 1-12; Alan Rosenus, *General Vallejo and the Advent of the Americans* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1995), 3-4. On the Pico family heritage, see Pío Pico, *Don Pío Pico's Historical Narrative*, trans. Arthur P. Botello, edited by Martin Cole and Henry Welcome (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1973), 9-25; and Marian Elizabeth Smith, "Pío Pico, Ranchero and Politician" (master's thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1927).

⁴For the weapons and equipment of Spanish and Mexican troops on the Northern frontier, see Odie B. Faulk, *The Leather Jacket Soldier: Spanish Military Equipment and Institutions of the late 18th Century* (Pasadena, CA: Socio-Technical Publications, 1971); and Sidney B. Brinckerhoff and Pierce A. Chamberlain, *Spanish Military Weapons in Colonial America, 1700-1821* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1972). On the history of the Catalan Volunteers, see Joseph P. Sánchez, *Spanish Bluecoats: The Catalan Volunteers in Northwestern New Spain, 1767-1810* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990). On the history of the California presidios, including the equipment of their garrisons, see John Phillip Langellier and Daniel B. Rosen, *El Presidio de San Francisco: A History Under Pain and Mexico, 1776-1846* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Corral of Westerners, 1996).

⁵Keegan, *A History of Warfare*, 15-16.

⁶In many ways the conflict between whites and Indians was a replay of the Spanish war against Natives in Lower California. For an eyewitness account of the military operations in Baja California, see Father Sigismundo Araval, *The Indian Uprising in Lower California, 1734-1737*, trans. Marguerite Eyer Vilbur (Los Angeles: Quivira Society, 1931). On the place of war in California's pre-Columbian cultures, see James J. Rawls, *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 10, 12. On the rebellion at San Diego, see Zephyrin Engelhardt, O.F.M., *San Diego Mission* (San Francisco: James H. Barry Co., 1920), 59-76. For the revolt at San Gabriel, see Zephyrin Engelhardt, O.F.M., *San Gabriel Mission and the Beginnings of Los Angeles* (San Gabriel, CA: Mission San Gabriel, 1927), 60-61. On the Chumash Re-

bellion, see Maynard Geiger, *Mission Santa Barbara, 1782-1965* (Santa Barbara: Franciscan Fathers of California, 1965), 85-94. For Vallejo's wars against California Indians, see Marion Lydia Lothrop, "The Indian Campaigns of General M.G. Vallejo: Defender of the Northern Frontier of California," *Quarterly of the Society of California Pioneers* IX (September, 1932), 161-205. On the character of white-native warfare during the Spanish period, see S. F. Cook, "Colonial Expeditions to the Interior of California: Central Valley, 1800-1820," in *University of California Publications Anthropological Records*, Vol. XVI 1955-1961 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 239-292. For a study of the nature of Indian-White relations in the region, see Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

⁷S.F. Cook, *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization II: The Physical and Demographic Reaction of the NonMission Indians in Colonial and Provincial California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1943), 2-11. For Vallejo's description of the battle against the Sayitomi, see Mariano Vallejo, *Historical and Personal Memoirs Relating to California*, trans. Earl R. Hewitt, (San Francisco, 1875), 3:19.

⁸Lothrop, "The Indian Campaigns of General M.G. Vallejo: Defender of the Northern Frontier of California," 166-168; José Sánchez and Joaquín Piña, "The Revolt of Estanislao," in Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz, eds., *Lands of Promise and Despair: Chronicles of Early California, 1535-1846* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2001), 366-374. Also see Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. III, 1825-1840, 110-113.

⁹Lothrop, "The Indian Campaigns of General M.G. Vallejo," 168-169. Vallejo consistently utilized his superior mass against Indian armies. Platón Vallejo recalled that when forces under his father encountered Chief Solano's warriors, "a severe battle was fought. . . many Indians were killed and a few Spaniards, but the Redmen were no match for the guns, swords and discipline of the soldiers." Platón M.G. Vallejo, *Memoirs of the Vallejos* (Fairfield, CA: James D.

Stevenson Pub., in cooperation with the Napa County Historical Society, 1994).

²⁰For a general overview of the origin and conduct of the various comic operas during the period, see J.M. Guinn, *History of the State of California and Biographical Record of Coast Counties, California* (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Co., 1904) and Tays, *Revolutionary California*. Solís himself was a Mexican sentenced to California for various crimes. On the Solís Revolt, see Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. III, 1825-1840, 67-85. For the story of the Híjar Colonists, see C. Alan Hutchison, *Frontier Settlement in Mexican California: The Híjar-Padrés Colony and Its Origins, 1769-1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969).

²¹Rory Muir, *Tactics and the Experience of Battle in the Age of Napoleon* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 7-9.

²²For Vallejo's account of Second Cahuenga Pass, see Vallejo, "Historical and Personal Memoirs," 5:10-11.

²³Vallejo's complaints formed part of a plea for reinforcements from Mexico. See Richard Rice, William A. Bullough and Richard J. Orsi, *The Elusive Eden: A New History of California* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996), 157. On attitudes toward familial ties and combat, see Antonio María Osio, *The History of Alta California: A Memoir of Mexican California*, trans. Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 107-110, 164.

²⁴During the 1836 campaign the southerners employed Monsieur Charlefoix's rifle company of 40 Shahunao hunters while Alvarado utilized Isaac Graham's rifle unit of 25 Americans. In 1838, the Angelenos hired a Texas sharpshooter, who killed one of Alvarado's artilleryman at the Battle of San Buenaventura.

²⁵Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft: History of California*, Vol. II, 1801-1824 (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1885), 584-586, 608-609, 672-674 and Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. III, 1825-1840, 608-609, 700-701. Some garrison commanders also kept their troops supplied from their own purse, see Angustias de la Guerra Ord, *Occurrences in Hispanic California*, trans. and ed. by Francis Price and William H.

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Ellison (Washington: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1956), 43. On the size of the Californio population during the period, see Rawls and Bean, *California*, 64.

²⁶For the Californio reaction to Echeandia's Indian auxiliaries, see Osio, *The History of Alta California*, 115-117. During the revolt against Micheltorena, many Californios abandoned the governor's cause because of rumors that Sutter was arming Indians as well. See McKittrick, *Vallejo: Son of California*, 232.

²⁷Tays, "Revolutionary California," 291-318.

²⁸Spanish Commandant-General Teodoro de Croix criticized the use of the leather jacket and shield at the end of the eighteenth century, arguing that they had been issued not because they were effective, but because they were inexpensive. See Faulk, *The Leather Jacket Soldier*, 53-61.

²⁹For example, at Second Cahuenga Pass, both armies numbered about 400 men. Micheltorena's force deployed three cannons, while the Californios possessed two. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft: History of California*, Vol. IV, 1840-1845 (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, 1885), 503. On the ratio of guns to men in Napoleonic armies, see Muir, *Tactics and the Experience of Battle in the Age of Napoleon*, 29-30.

³⁰On the deployment of Victoria's and rebel forces in 1831, see Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. III, 1825-1840, 206-208.

³¹For the ammunition problems at Cahuenga Pass, see Tays, *Revolutionary California*, 491. Bancroft also reports that some of the rounds used by the rebels at Second Cahuenga Pass consisted of small stones. Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. IV, 1840-1845, 503.

³²Les Driver, "Carrillo's Flying Artillery," *California Historical Society Quarterly* XLVIII (December 1969), 346; Walker, Bear Flag Rising: *The Conquest of California*, 1846 (New York: Forge Books, 1999), 237. The Californios also experienced a shortage of powder at the Battle of Natividad. See Tays, "Revolutionary California," 762.

³³Vallejo, "Personal and Historical Memoirs," 3:136.

³⁴Vallejo, "Personal and Historical Memoirs," 5:10.

³⁵On the ineffectiveness of Californio artillery and the skill of Robert Stockton, see Dwight L. Clarke, *Stephen Watts Kearney, Soldier of the West* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 246-247. During the Napoleonic Wars, it normally took two years to train a gunnery officer. See Gunther Rothenberg, *The Napoleonic Wars* (London: Cassell and Company, 1999), 113.

³⁶Osio, *The History of Alta California*, 92-93. Mexican commanders were well aware of the ineffectiveness of wooden walls as a shield against artillery fire. During his reconnaissance of Fort Ross, Mariano Vallejo reported that "the [stockade] walls and the buildings are built of weak timbers, insufficient to withstand any attack except by natives who have no heavy arms, only bows and arrows. They could not withstand a cannon ball of any caliber." See Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, *Report of a Visit to Fort Ross and Bodega Bay in April 1833* by Mariano G. Vallejo, trans. Glenn Farris and Rose-Marie Beebe (Bakersfield: California Mission Studies Association, 2000), 14. Californio cavalry may have been a more troublesome target than typical European armies. According to Vallejo, "the saddles in use among the California rancheros were different from those which the regular army soldiers used. The California saddle was a kind of armor which protected both the horse and rider." See Vallejo, "Historical and Personal Memoirs," 2:127.

³⁷Specifically, Alvarado's revolt against Gutiérrez occurred in November. The 1838 cannonade at San Buenaventura took place in March, although two shots were apparently fired at the final action at Las Flores in April. The two artillery duels during the revolt against Micheltorena occurred in February, and a number of narratives, particularly Tays and Osio, mention heavy rains throughout the campaign. The performance of the Californios' single artillery piece at San Pedro was effective because the Americans possessed no artillery or horses of their own and chose to repeatedly charge the Californio cannon with foot soldiers alone. See Driver, "Carrillo's Flying Artillery," 335-349.

³⁸On heroic styles of leadership, see John Keegan, *The Mask of Command* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 13-91, 113-126. For the

revolt against Governor Victoria, see Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. III, 1825-1840, 186-212; and Vallejo, "Personal and Historical Memoirs," 2:127.

³⁹Lisbeth Haas, *Conquest and Historical Identities in California, 1769-1936* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 37.

⁴⁰Pío Pico, *Historical Narrative*, 110.

⁴¹For a discussion of the momentum equation in military physics, see Leonhard, *The Art of Maneuver*, 15, 39, 84-88.

⁴²On the development of light cavalry in Spain, see Archer Jones, *The Art of War in the Western World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 190-194. On the Catalanion Volunteers' battlefield adaptations in Sonora, see Sánchez, *Spanish Bluecoats*, 16-31.

⁴³Tays, "Revolutionary California," 343-350; Osio, *The History of Alta California*, 152-157; Vallejo, "Historical and Personal Memoirs," 3:133-136; Guinn, *History of the State of California*, 102.

⁴⁴Guinn, *History of the State of California*, 103-104.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 104; Osio, *The History of Alta California*, 199-200. Vallejo, "Historical and Personal Memoirs," 3:204-219.

⁴⁶On Castro's attempt to preempt Santa Barbara support, see Vallejo, "Historical and Personal Memoirs," 3:314.

⁴⁷Guinn, *History of the State of California*, 106; Pico, *Historical Narrative*, 72-81. Vallejo, 3:314; Osio, *The History of Alta California*, 188-190.

⁴⁸Guinn, *History of the State of California*, 106; Osio, *The History of Alta California*, 187-192; Pico, *Historical Narrative*, 72-81.

⁴⁹Vallejo, "Historical and Personal Memoirs," 4:310; Miller, *Juan Alvarado*, 102; Ord, *Occurrences in Hispanic California*, 55.

⁵⁰Guinn, *History of the State of California*, 110-111; Tays, *Revolutionary California*, 487-489.

⁵¹Guinn puts the casualties as one killed and several wounded in the skirmish, while Tays states that "several" men were killed.

⁵²For the debilitating effects of Micheltorena's march south, see Rosenus, *General Vallejo and the Advent of the Americans*, 62-

9; Tays, *Revolutionary California*, 489; and Vallejo, "Historical and Personal Memoirs," 7.

³Guinn, *History of the State of California*, 12. Tays, *Revolutionary California*, 490-491.

⁴The mercenaries were vital to Micheltorena's confidence in victory. As Bancroft observes, "Micheltorena had never any idea that he could defeat the Californians with his cholos of the battalion alone. The former were not very good soldiers, but infinitely superior to the latter in every way." Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. IV, 1840-1845, 508-509.

⁵On the general history of the U.S.-Mexican War in California and the preliminaries to the second conquest of Los Angeles, see Neal Harlow, *California Conquered: War and*

Peace on the Pacific (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Dale L. Walker, *Bear Flag Rising*, 165-205; John S.D. Eisenhower, *So Far From God: The U.S. War with Mexico, 1846-1848* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 195-216. Also see Dwight L. Clarke, *Stephen Watts Kearny: Soldier of the West*; and Lisbeth Haas, "War in California, 1846-1848," in Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Richard J. Orsi, eds., *Contested Eden: California Before the Gold Rush* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 331-355. For the Battle of Natividad, which ended in the deaths of four Americans and three Californios, see Tays, "Revolutionary California," 752-763. For a detailed account of the Battle of San Pedro, see Driver, "Carrillo's Flying Artillery," 335-349. For the Battle of San Pascual, see Walker, *Bear Flag Rising*, 206-228; and Eisen-

hower, *So Far From God*, 222-227. Also see Arthur Woodward, *Lances at San Pascual* (San Francisco: California Historical Society, 1948); and Owen C. Coy, *The Battle of San Pascual: A Report of the California Historical Survey Commission with Special Reference to its Location* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office, 1921).

⁵⁶The Americans were so impressed with the performance of Californio cavalry during the U.S.-Mexican War that the War Department authorized the raising of a Californio cavalry battalion during the American Civil War. See Tom Prezelski, "Lives of the Californio Lancers: The First Battalion of Native California Cavalry, 1863-1866," *Journal of Arizona History* 40 (Spring 1999), 29-52.



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REVIEWS

Edited by James J. Rawls

AFTER THE RUINS, 1906 AND 2006: REPHOTOGRAPHING THE SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE

By Mark Klett with Michael Lundgren, essays by Philip L. Fradkin and Rebecca Solnit and an interview with the photographer by Karin Breuer (Berkeley: University of California Press in association with the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 2006, 134 pp., \$49.95 cloth, \$24.95 paper)

REVIEWED BY MARTHA A. SANDWEISS, PROFESSOR OF AMERICAN STUDIES AND HISTORY, AMHERST COLLEGE

After the Ruins, by the talented photographer Mark Klett, marks the latest installment of his remarkable series of books documenting change in the American West over the past 150

years. For the first volume, *Second View: The Rephotographic Survey Project* (1984), he and his collaborators rephotographed 122 sites first documented by the wet-plate photographers who accompanied the western exploring expeditions of the 1860s and 70s. Refining the techniques of what they called "rephotography," they worked out ways to reproduce the precise camera positions, time of day, and light conditions used by the original photographers. The resulting pictures were a revelation to anyone interested in western history, making clear that change does not unfold in a straightforward linear fashion. Some sites became more developed over time, but others, particularly mining boom towns, decayed back into the earth.

Klett followed up on this work twenty years later with the collaboratively

produced *Third Views, Second Sights* (2004), which revisits the sites documented in *Second View*, recording more recent changes with video and audio interviews, as well as photography. In 2005, he published *Yosemite in Time*, a book that explores issues of visual perception and historical change through the comparison of new and old images of Yosemite.

In his latest project, he turns his view camera on the city of San Francisco, rephotographing some of the classic images of the 1906 earthquake and its fiery aftermath to help mark the centennial of what has long been regarded as the nation's greatest urban disaster.

In the aftermath of Katrina and the destruction of so much of New Orleans, the visual lessons of this book become particularly sobering. Klett disrupts our conventional reading of paired photographs by placing each new black and white image before the one taken a century ago. The reader thus scans the pair less as a parable of progress and redemption, than as a kind of visual warning about the impossibility of warding off natural disaster. Cities collapse. And as Philip Fradkin reminds us in his short essay about the great earthquake and its photographers, the human impulse to rebuild and get on with things is powerful. "The singular purpose of the city's collective will," he writes, "was to reconstruct San Francisco as quickly as possible on the same vulnerable ground with a minimum

AFTER THE RUINS

1906 AND 2006 REPHOTOGRAPHING THE SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE



MARK KLETT WITH MICHAEL LUNDGREN ESSAYS BY PHILIP L. FRADKIN AND REBECCA SOLNIT
AND AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHER BY KARIN BREUER

mount of safeguards.” [14] Rebecca Johnit, in a beautiful meditation about the meaning of ruins, reminds the readers that disaster was a way of life in San Francisco. Six great fires devastated America’s greatest western city between 1848 and 1852, a strong earthquake wrecked havoc in 1868. Yet few took the steps necessary to avoid the disaster of 1906.

Urban ruins can serve as a powerful connection to the past, a reminder of the limits of human hubris. Where land is valuable, however, ruins cannot be allowed to remain. In Klett’s photographs we can only sometimes find the traces of the old in the new. A few buildings survive here and there, the roll of the land seems the same. But San Francisco’s skyscrapers crowd out the horizon line in some of the pictures, making it hard for us to realize we’re standing on the familiar ground of the old 1906 views. Ultimately, as much as they ask us to think back about the ways in which urban change has unfolded over the past century, Klett’s pictures also compel us to think forward in time, to the moment when his new urban landscapes will also be understood as artifacts of a distant past, to the moment when Americans—coping with some new urban disaster—will look back at these early twenty-first-century images and wonder that we could ever live in such denial about the inevitability of change.

THE TOUGHEST GANG IN TOWN: POLICE STORIES FROM OLD SAN FRANCISCO

By Kevin J. Mullen (Novato, CA:
Noir Publications, 2005, 266 pp.,
\$16.95, paper)

DANGEROUS STRANGERS: MINORITY NEWCOMERS AND CRIMINAL VIOLENCE IN THE URBAN WEST, 1850–2000

By Kevin J. Mullen (New York:
Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 2003 pp.,
\$69.95, cloth)

REVIEWED BY GORDON MORRIS BAKKEN,
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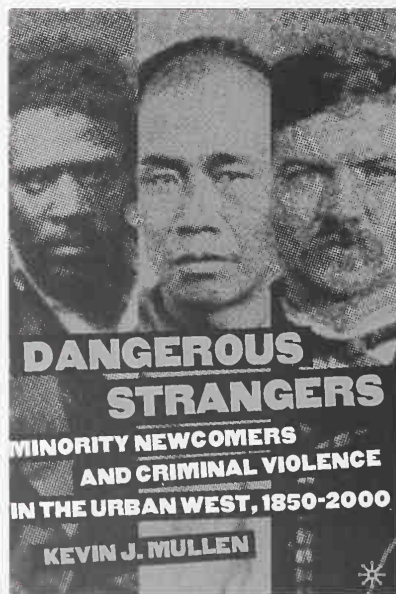
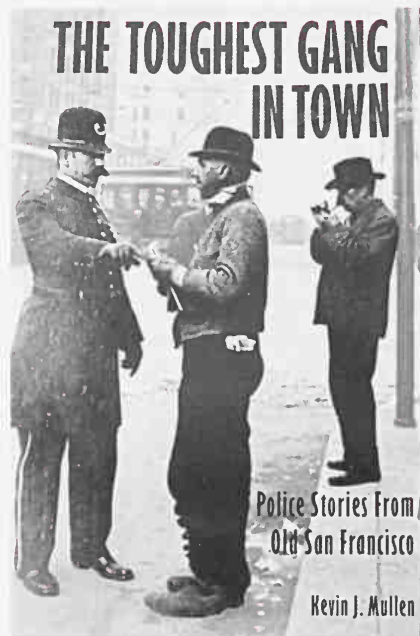
The Toughest Gang in Town targets a general audience with fascinating stories of career criminals, ethnic gangs, cross-dressing felons, and hoodlums confronting an increasingly professional police force. The context is a “town with a very full history of crazy times.” [p. 205] The vigilantes of 1856 gave rise to a police force that deployed armed and uniformed officers who were aggressive in crime prevention and detection. As early as 1857 Chief William Curtis rounded up known criminals, tied them together, and paraded them in Portsmouth Square so the citizenry could easily identify them. This was followed by the regular practice of photographing criminals and creating mug books. On the street, officers used night sticks to change the behavior of hoodlum gangs.

Mullen’s chapters tell of a police force getting control of the streets. He verifies without citation the findings of Philip J. Ethington’s *The Public City: The Political Construction of Urban Life in San Francisco, 1850–1900* (1994). Ethington argued that the San Francisco police developed a professional bureaucracy without the political controls found in New York, Boston, or Philadelphia. Further, the department was managed by career officers who commanded highly paid and dedicated patrolmen. These beat cops made more arrests per week than any other department in the United States.

Dangerous Strangers targets professional social scientists and deploys statistics, charts, graphs, and scholarly notation. Mullen sets out to show that in San Francisco, violence was not a product of the oppression of the host society but was due to the methods of conflict resolution and the culture of criminality within various immigrant groups. Mullen focuses on Australians, Latinos, Irish, Chinese, Italians, and African Americans involved in the seven thousand homicides and other felonies committed in San Francisco between 1850 and 2000.

The Australians brought their criminal element with them and committed a disproportionate amount of street robberies. So too the Latinos, who committed the preponderance

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of criminal homicide, according to Mullen. The Irish and Chinese displaced the Latinos at the low end of the economic ladder. Irish criminal culture brought violence to the home and streets. The high Chinese homicide rate resulted from family feuds and labor disputes. Tong wars also left carnage in the streets, which subsided by the early twentieth century. Italian immigrants brought gangs to America and fought turf wars.

The police responded with patrol wagons and call-box systems, suppressing most of the behavior. Over time, the violence subsided. Irish, Chinese, and Italian entrants in the mid-twentieth century were comparatively peaceful. Part of this new peaceful nature was due to improved socio-economic conditions, but improved police procedures clearly affected behavior.

Both books provide provocative reading. *Dangerous Strangers* provides a clear marker for the serious study of immigrant cultures and the importance of police procedures. Mullen does not consider the issue of gender in his analysis as did Eric H. Monkkoenen in *Murder in New York City* (2001). In New York the murder rate declined as more women became part of immigrant neighborhoods and worked to domesticate men. Perhaps the murder rate of some of San Francisco's ethnic groups, notoriously male in the nineteenth century, changed as women made civility significant in family and public life.

GOLD RUSH SAINTS: CALIFORNIA MORMONS AND THE GREAT RUSH FOR RICHES

By Kenneth N. Owens (Spokane, Washington: Arthur H. Clark Company, 2004, 398 pp., \$39.50 cloth, \$19.95 paper)

REVIEWED BY NEWELL G. BRINGHURST,
INSTRUCTOR OF HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT,
COLLEGE OF THE SEQUOIAS, VISALIA

This important volume produced by Kenneth N. Owens, professor emeritus of History and Ethnic Studies at California State University, Sacramento, explores the activities of the Mormons or Latter-day Saints in early Gold Rush California. Owens notes that the "Mormon role in the California gold rush has been largely overlooked" [17] first by contemporary observers and later by chroniclers of California's past—both Mormon and non-Mormon. Owens effectively sets the historical record straight, carefully documenting the contributions of Latter-day Saints.

In making his case, Owens presents a rich variety of historical documents, including contemporary narratives, later recollections, and other primary source materials, all interwoven into an informative narrative history. The volume focuses on the period from 1846, when the first Latter-day Saints arrived, until 1857 when Brigham Young directed all his followers to abandon the Golden State and return to the Great Basin.

Owens demonstrates that Mormon influence in California was strong even before the Gold Rush. Two groups of Latter-day Saints made their way to California in 1846. The first, a colonizing expedition of 240 Mormons under the leadership of the flamboyant Samuel Brannan, traveled by sea from New York City aboard the *Brooklyn* arriving in San Francisco in July 1846. The second, five hundred military volunteers, known as the Mormon Battalion, part of Stephen W. Kearny's Army of the West during Mexican-American War, traveled from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, entering California by way of San Diego in August 1846. The arrival of these two Mormon groups predated Brigham Young's July 1847 entry into the Great Basin.

California Saints were important in the early stages of the Gold Rush. Members of the Mormon Battalion, most notably Henry W. Bigler—premier chronicler of that event, were major players in the initial discovery of gold in Coloma at John Sutter's Mill on the American River in January 1848. Even larger deposits were discovered by other Mormon Battalion veterans at Mormon Island, just east of Sacramento. Owens effectively argues that this later discovery was more significant in setting off the Gold Rush than the earlier discovery at Sutter's Mill.

Also playing a central role in publicizing the discovery of gold was maverick Mormon Samuel Brannan, who

upon hearing reports of the Mormon Island discovery, reportedly ran through the streets of San Francisco swinging a vial of gold shouting: "Gold, gold, from the American River!" Owens carefully outlines Brannan's often nefarious activities, enabling him to benefit financially, thereby becoming "California's first millionaire."

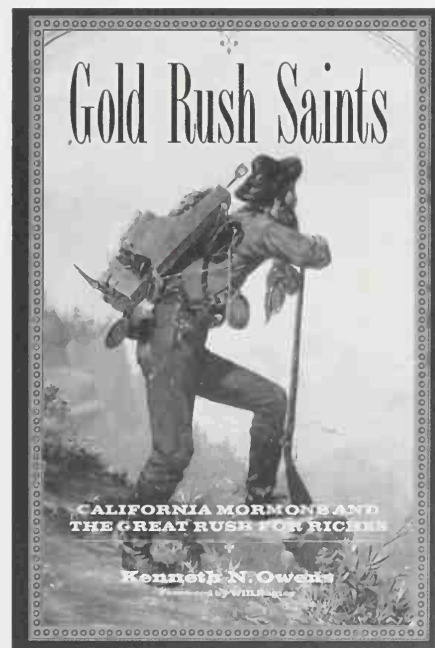
Mormons also contributed in other ways to the development of Gold Rush California. Responding to the counsel of Brigham Young to gather to the Great Basin with the main body of Latter-day Saints, eastward-bound Saints opened the Mormon-Carson Pass Emigrant Trail in 1849. This Mormon-built trail served as the major route for thousands of westward bound non-Mormons flocking to the California gold fields during the first two years of the Gold Rush.

Also benefiting from the California Gold Rush were the Great Basin Saints themselves. California bound-emigrants who stopped off in Salt Lake City provided a much-needed stimulus to the then-depressed local economy, through the purchase of food and other goods needed for the final push on to the California gold fields.

This Mormon economic windfall complemented, and was a part of Brigham Young's so-called "Gold Rush Policy"—a complex, sophisticated strategy, consisting of three major parts: (1) preventing a mass exodus of Utah Latter-day Saints to the California gold fields; (2) tap-

ping the riches of California for the benefit of the Utah Saints, and (3) maintaining significant Latter-day Saint presence in Gold Rush California, at least in the short run.

In essence, Young's policy succeeded. Utah Saints generally avoided the epidemic of "gold fever" sweeping other regions, with few Mormons abandoning Great Basin farming for California gold mining. Young did organize a so-called "gold mission" consisting of two small companies sent to California in October 1849 to mine on behalf of the Saints. This experiment, however, was short-lived,



REVIEWS

ending in 1850. In the words of Ken Owens: "Most Saints on [this] mining assignment had found little gold but had suffered extreme fatigue, want, and illness, and they were more than ready to quit the placer diggings." [235] More successful were Mormons mining independently, most notably Thomas Rhodes, who discovered a large amount of gold at a site that became known as Rhodes Diggings, east of Folsom. Much of this gold found its way to Utah when Rhodes and his company left California in September 1849.

Utah Mormons also benefited from tithes and other revenue obtained from California Saints successful in mining and related pursuits. These revenues collected by California Mormon leaders, Apostles Charles C. Rich and Amasa Lyman, were sent to Salt Lake City. This gold along with that provided by Thomas Rhodes was stamped into gold coins, providing a circulating medium for the Great Basin Saints. In the words of Ken Owen: "California's gold underwrote an era of relative financial stability and brisk trade in [Utah's] Zion colony." [224]

Those Latter-day Saints who remained in the Golden State contributed to the life and culture of early Gold Rush California. Small but significant Mormon settlements flourished in northern California, specifically in Yolo County, west of Sacramento, and at Alder Creek, in the heart of the Gold Country. Mormon Apostle

George Q. Cannon, based in San Francisco, established a local newspaper, *The Western Standard*, published from February 1856 to November 1857. Unfortunately, Cannon's pugnacious style of journalism "roused latent anti-Mormon sentiments throughout California and elsewhere on the Pacific Coast." [312]

Ultimately, an "explosion of anti-Mormon sentiment in the gold country by the late summer of 1857" [328], combined with the outbreak of the so-called Utah War with the dispatch of federal troops to the Great Basin, prompted the withdrawal of all faithful Latter-day Saints from California in August 1857. Not until the late nineteenth century did Utah Latter-day Saints resume California missionary activities.

In summery, Ken Owens's *Gold Rush Saints* is a significant and in some ways seminal work, recounting an important, albeit neglected, chapter of California Gold Rush history. It deserves to be read by all students of California history as well as scholars interested in Mormon history. It also commands the attention of individuals interested in the general history of religion in the American West.

"Painter at Pueblo, Taos,"
October 10, 1917
Fred Payne Clatworthy,
photographer
Lumiere Autochrome
on glass, 5" x 7"
Courtesy Colorado Historical
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THEODORE WORES IN THE SOUTHWEST

October 20, 2006 - January 27, 2007

This exhibition of artwork by one of California's native sons features paintings of the American Southwest and dozens of previously undiscovered photographs documenting his work and his travels. More than half of Wores' Southwestern paintings were executed in California at the Santa Fe Railway's promotional Grand Canyon exhibit at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915. The rest were painted at the actual Grand Canyon and in Taos, New Mexico in 1916 and 1917.

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*Bohemian San Francisco & the
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Harvey L. Jones, *The Art of Arthur & Lucia Mathews*

Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco*

Stephen Becker, Editor, *Theodore Wores in the Southwest*

David Crosson, *Moderator*

Thursday, December 7, 2006

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Lecture & Book Signing with Stephen Becker



J. S. Holliday, continued from page 3

by those who challenged conventional thinking and, they, in turn, realized that they could count on his unswerving support. Jim loved to confront, argue, swear, shout, laugh, and pound. He deplored "yes men" and with supreme self-confidence expressed disappointment when not challenged or questioned. Although he will always be known as *the* historian of the Gold Rush, he embraced all eras of California and Western history. In particular, he called attention to the fact that much of the twentieth century had slipped by and historians needed to turn their energy and focus on modern subjects. He used the vehicle of *California History* to reflect his interest in cutting-edge scholarship.

Along those lines, Jim wanted to recognize those who had already taken on contemporary issues. For years, the society's most prestigious form of recognition, the Henry R. Wagner Award, had been given to scholars whose achievements focused solely on pre-1906 California. Jim dramatically changed that when he nominated Carey McWilliams for the award. McWilliams was not a traditional historian but a journalist well known for his provocative books including *California: The Great Exception*, *Brothers under the Skin*, *North from Mexico*, and *Factories in the Field*. One of Jim's proudest moments took place on the evening of May 6, 1976, when a packed audience gathered at the *Los Angeles Times* auditorium to see McWilliams receive this cherished award. McWilliams called the society "an organization of awesome prestige."

Without doubt, Jim Holliday was the most careful, patient, and thorough scholar I have ever encountered. All would agree that Jim was a brilliant writer and equally brilliant in his interpretations. It became legendary how long his *The World Rushed In* took to complete. For example, Gold Rush historian Rodman W. Paul, wrote in 1964, "We are promised a new study by J. S. Holliday, tentatively called *A Pocket Full of Rocks*."

That picturesque title, based on a gold seeker's words, Jim planned as the original title of his award-winning, bestselling book.

It took Jim close to three decades to finish this California classic. This can be easily explained, however, as his commitment to his day jobs consumed his weekends and evenings. Serving as assistant director of the Bancroft Library, directing the installation of exhibits at the Oakland Museum of California in its spectacular new building, planning national conferences, giving countless speeches, and directing the California Historical Society left little time for research and writing. *The World Rushed In* no doubt could have been published much earlier, but it would not have satisfied the author.

Painstaking is a descriptive word that does not do justice to the effort he put into his book. Many years ago I asked him for his professional papers, and he willingly presented them to the California State Library. In going through them I became even more impressed by the quality of his research. Found in his papers are hundreds and hundreds of 3 by 5- and 5 by 7-inch cards laboriously filled out summarizing the Gold Rush diaries, journals, and letters found in dozens of institutions. All of this note taking he deemed necessary to give context to his editing of the William Swain journal. The index cards alone stand as a bibliographical masterpiece of the overland trail.

His second magisterial book, *A Rush for Riches*, again demonstrated Jim's total commitment to scholarship. Note how the word "rush" plays such prominence in his titles. Jim was always in a rush to find new sources and ideas but never in a rush to finish a paragraph. At a meeting in his home, he told a group of us that it took him one week just to complete two paragraphs. That book, published in conjunction with the Oakland Museum and University of California Press, was originally designed as a companion to the mu-

seum's momentous Gold Rush sesquicentennial exhibit, *Gold Fever*.

Like seeing a gold nugget in a stream, Jim seized the opportunity to write far and away the most compelling, fact-filled, energizing history of California's defining event. Not hamstrung with administrative or fund raising responsibilities, Jim could devote all his volcanic energy to the task of writing the book and advising the museum on its ambitious exhibit. Like a sea captain at the helm of a ship going around Cape Horn, Jim wrestled this stunning book to completion. He gathered quantities of information and hammered it into deft prose. In addition, he scoured the nation in search of new, fresh images to support his elegant writing. The result was another masterpiece. If anyone could make the reader feel as if he himself were in the gold fields, it was Jim Holliday. Reading the text, you can hear Jim's husky voice and imagine the grunts and sounds of those red-shirted miners hoping to make a pile. I have often heard speculation that, figuratively speaking, Jim could very well have been one of those rugged gold hunters portrayed on the dust jacket of his book. I agree!

With a mind that raced at warp speed, the completion of *Rush for Riches* did not signal the end of Jim's writing. He had already gathered material for books that would demonstrate California's amazing influence on the United States and the world. The Gold Rush put California on the international stage and this latest endeavor would show how California put its stamp on Nevada, Panama, Alaska, British Columbia, and indeed the whole psyche of the nation. As he loved to point out, California was a place where no one said no (at least for a brief time). In addition, he planned to do a more in-depth analysis of the Panama crossing, the site of the first transcontinental railroad. Last, he wanted to fully edit a new edition of Horace Greeley's famous book, *An Overland Journey from New York to San Fran-*

cisco in the Summer of 1859. One can only imagine the footnotes and introduction that Jim would have created.

Despite his herculean accomplishments, Jim continually heaped praise on others. Although he continually astonished us with his verve and energy, he often expressed amazement at the success of others. For example, after reading a book by Richard H. Dillon on the Sacramento Delta in preparation for a speech, Jim called yours truly to say, "We must do something to celebrate this remarkable historian." Plunging into the task with the vigor of a twenty-year old, this dynamo of eighty-one years orchestrated a memorable evening for Dillon, another octogenarian. Making countless phone calls, Jim lined up the beautiful World Affairs Council dining room, worked out the logistics for invitations, and corralled sponsors. Held on a sparkling evening on November 4, 2005, Jim pulled off another memorable event. As the Dillon family beamed with pride, Jim with his usual panache, served as master of ceremonies. All who admired Dick Dillon will forever cherish that night and all realized that only a Jim Holliday could bring together so many people in such a wonderful setting.

To the end, Jim remained an inspiration. From time-to-time, he would call to say how much he enjoyed the California State Library Foundation *Bulletin*. He did not have to do this, but he did. Such praise is a tonic that will be forever missed. Jim telephoned two weeks before his passing. His breathing was painfully labored but he wanted to talk books and California history and tell me about a new collection that he was directing to the State Library. Most of all, he expressed his friendship. It broke my heart to call his home on August 31 only to find out from Belinda Holliday that he had died that morning. Jim Holliday will always be remembered as one of the great and towering figures of California. No one who ever met this transplanted Hoosier will ever forget JSH.

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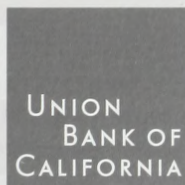
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SPOTLIGHT

PHOTOGRAPHER

Philip Adam

LOCATION

Solano County



WALLED OFF

Uniformly boxy houses in a new development in Solano County face inward, walled off against the rolling hills above them and the disturbed terrain around them. Although this enclave appears isolated in what might once have been farmland, since this photograph was made and publication, identical commuter havens have sprouted up around it.

Philip Adam, photographer for the California Historical Society, has made photographs in Solano County for the past ten years. A collection of his work, *Solano's Gold, The People and Their Orchards*, was published and exhibited by the Vacaville Museum in 1998 as a tribute to this rich agricultural region of California. Portfolios of *Solano's Gold*

are in the permanent collections at the State Library, the Bancroft Library and U.C. Davis special collections.

NEW HOMES, GREEN VALLEY, CALIFORNIA.
SOLANO COUNTY

PHILIP ADAM © 2004
adameye@sbcglobal.net



October 2006

Dear friends,

I have now been on the job for nearly six months and want to take this earliest, albeit still late, opportunity to introduce myself as the new executive director of the California Historical Society. I hope that I can convey my excitement, while at the same time address the challenges ahead without suggesting that they are either unique or overwhelming.

I have spent much of these initial months meeting and listening to Trustees, employees, and members talk about their experiences, aspirations, goals, pride, and concerns. It has been a rewarding experience. In addition, consultant Gail Anderson has been interviewing people more formally as part of a strategic planning process that is one of the most important legacies of previous executive director, Stephen Becker. Here are some of the things that we have heard:

- There is a tremendous amount of loyalty and good will toward CHS by all people at all levels of involvement.
- Nearly everyone recognizes the scope, depth, and value of the CHS collections and encourages us to continue to improve both their care and access.
- Many of you retain serious concerns over the intent and terms of our collections-sharing agreement with the Autry National Center.
- All of us share an abiding concern for the long-term financial health of the organization.

We are fortunate to have such a large base of dedicated, loyal members. You are the first great asset of any organization. Therefore, you deserve, and I am required to provide, frank acknowledgment and discussion of the issues you have raised.

First, the primary motive for almost everything that CHS has done over the years, including the agreement with the Autry National Center, has been to care for, and extend access to, our collections. There is no question that periodic financial fluctuations too often have threatened that commitment, but I can assure you that the commitment has remained firm throughout. That having been said, we (the Trustees, employees, and I) are committed to significant reinvestment in care of, and public access to, the collections in the immediate future. That is a pledge.

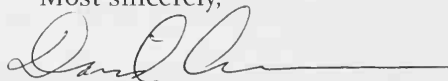
Second, last year we entered into the long-term collection-sharing agreement with the Autry National Center that will help ensure the care and public exhibition of 68 paintings and a historic costume collection that otherwise might receive neither. This agreement reflects the realities of our facilities, the needs of the resources, and, even more important, our statewide mission. We are, after all, the *California Historical Society*. We maintain ownership of the collections as well as the opportunity to use any and all of the items at any time for exhibits back in San Francisco or elsewhere around the state. It is not the first such agreement. The costume collection has been managed by the Los Angeles Fashion Institute for years, and the USC Library has made the huge TICOR photograph collection available in ways that only enhance our service to California and Californians. It seems to me that our primary obligation is to care for and use our resources in the most responsible way on behalf of all of the people of the state. The arrangement with the Autry National Center is a valuable way to accomplish that goal.

Third, financially struggling historical organizations regrettably are the norm, rather than the exception, across the nation. There is no denying that the California Historical Society has experienced more than its share of financial instability over its history, an admission that places only a larger burden on all of us now to ensure the long-term financial health and institutional viability of this organization. That is why the Board of Trustees currently is engaged in a rigorous exercise of self-examination and business planning. This is more than a pro-forma strategic planning process and is intended literally to re-invent what we do and how we do it in order to better serve people throughout California and create a financial model that will sustain us into the future.

We want to engage you directly in all of these discussions and will be redesigning our website to allow us to continue an ongoing conversation about anything that you think is important. So, keep checking our website (www.californiahistoricalsociety.org) for the opportunity to review planning documents and talk with us about anything that is on your mind.

In the meantime, never ever hesitate to call me directly with any questions, comments, or concerns that you might have: 415/357-1848 x211. Thank you again for your continuing involvement in history and your commitment to the California Historical Society.

Most sincerely,



David Crosson
Executive Director



*"I write for no other purpose than to add
to the beauty that now belongs to me..."*

*I write a book for no other reason than to add
three or four hundred acres to my magnificent estate."*

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A quarterly journal published by CHS since 1922, *California History* features articles by leading scholars and writers focusing on the heritage of California and the West from pre-Columbian to modern times. Illustrated articles, pictorial essays, and book reviews examine the ongoing dialogue between the past and the present. Articles appearing in this journal are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.

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FROM THE EDITOR

RARE OPPORTUNITY

Already a multilingual and experienced newspaper typesetter, writer, and translator, Francisco P. Ramírez founded, edited, and published the first Spanish-language newspaper in southern California on June 19, 1855. Although he was just seventeen years old, the Los Angeles native seized the moment and put his first amendment rights to use—singing the praises and glories of the U.S. Constitution; celebrating the liberty and justice it guaranteed to him and to all other citizens; printing poetry, local news, gossip, and advice to the lovelorn; and condemning individuals and the government for cruelty, avarice, wrath, and inconstancy.

In this newspaper, *El Clamor Público* or *The Public Outcry*, Ramírez proved himself the activist, grasping the rare opportunity to make a difference. He crusaded for racial equality, the equitable administration of justice for all citizens, and full political rights. He railed against slavery. At times he despaired that the ideals he cherished so profoundly had been discarded by the majority, but he persevered as an engaged citizen. He studied, followed, and entered politics, running for public office more than once.

In a long, active, and varied career in journalism, public service, and the law, Ramírez lived in Los Angeles and also in San Francisco, San Jose, Sacramento, Marysville, Ures (Sonora), Real del Castillo, and Ensenada (Baja California Norte). He pursued his ideals, even though in the latter part of his life he was a fugitive from justice and lived in exile. Still, in Ensenada, where he was a family-man, attorney, and businessman, he was honored as a city founder and his memory lingers more strongly there than it does here in his native state.

And now, all of us at *California History* are seizing the moment to salute the intrepid Francisco Ramírez, his pioneering newspaper *El Clamor Público*, and the legacy engendered by the bravura in those pages, which appeared a century and a half ago. In this special-subject issue of *California History*, there are lessons to be absorbed from that small but mighty newspaper. From Ramírez, who was way ahead of his time in speaking out against American imperialism, and in the pages of *El Clamor*, we learn a great deal about the nature of the press in the first decade of California statehood, about racial formation, and sadly, but all-too-true, we also learn a lot about ethnic and racial hatred. The mid-nineteenth century was plagued by extra-legal punitive action against Mexicans in California and other regions newly added to the United States. That experience resonates in today's immigration debates and Americans' continuing struggles to reckon with our nation's tradition of broadcasting the beacons of liberty and opportunity to oppressed and disadvantaged peoples all over the Americas, Asia, and Europe.

The rare opportunity lives on.

Janet Fireman, *Editor*

EL CIUDADANO RAMON RAYON,
General de brigada y Gobernador del Distrito federal.

El día 6 del corriente he recibido por la Secretaría de Relaciones el decreto que sigue.

„El Exmo. Sr. Presidente interino de los Estados- Unidos Mexicanos se ha servido dirigirme el decreto que sigue.

„El Presidente interino de los Estados- Unidos Mexicanos, á los habitantes de la República, sabed: Que el Congreso general ha decretado lo siguiente.

„Se erige en ciudad el pueblo de los Angeles de la Alta California, y será para lo sucesivo la Capital de este Territorio.=Basilio Arrillaga, diputado presidente.=Antonio Pacheco Leal, presidente del Senado.=Demetrio del Castillo, diputado secretario.=Manuel Miranda, senador secretario.”

Por tanto, mando se imprima, publique, circule, y se le dé el debido cumplimiento. Palacio del Gobierno federal en México á 23 de Mayo de 1835. =Miguel Barragán.=A D. José Maria Gutierrez de Estrada.”

Y lo comunico á V. S. para su inteligencia y fines consiguientes.

Dios y libertad. México 23 de Mayo de 1835. =Gutierrez Estrada.=Sr. Gobernador del Distrito federal”

Y para que llegue á noticia de todos, mando se publique por bando en esta Capital y en la comprension del Distrito, fijándose en los parages acostumbrados, y circulándose á quienes toque cuidar de su observancia. Dado en México á 10 de Junio de 1835.

Ramon Rayon.

Lic. José Francisco de Alcántara,
Secretario.

California's Second Capital

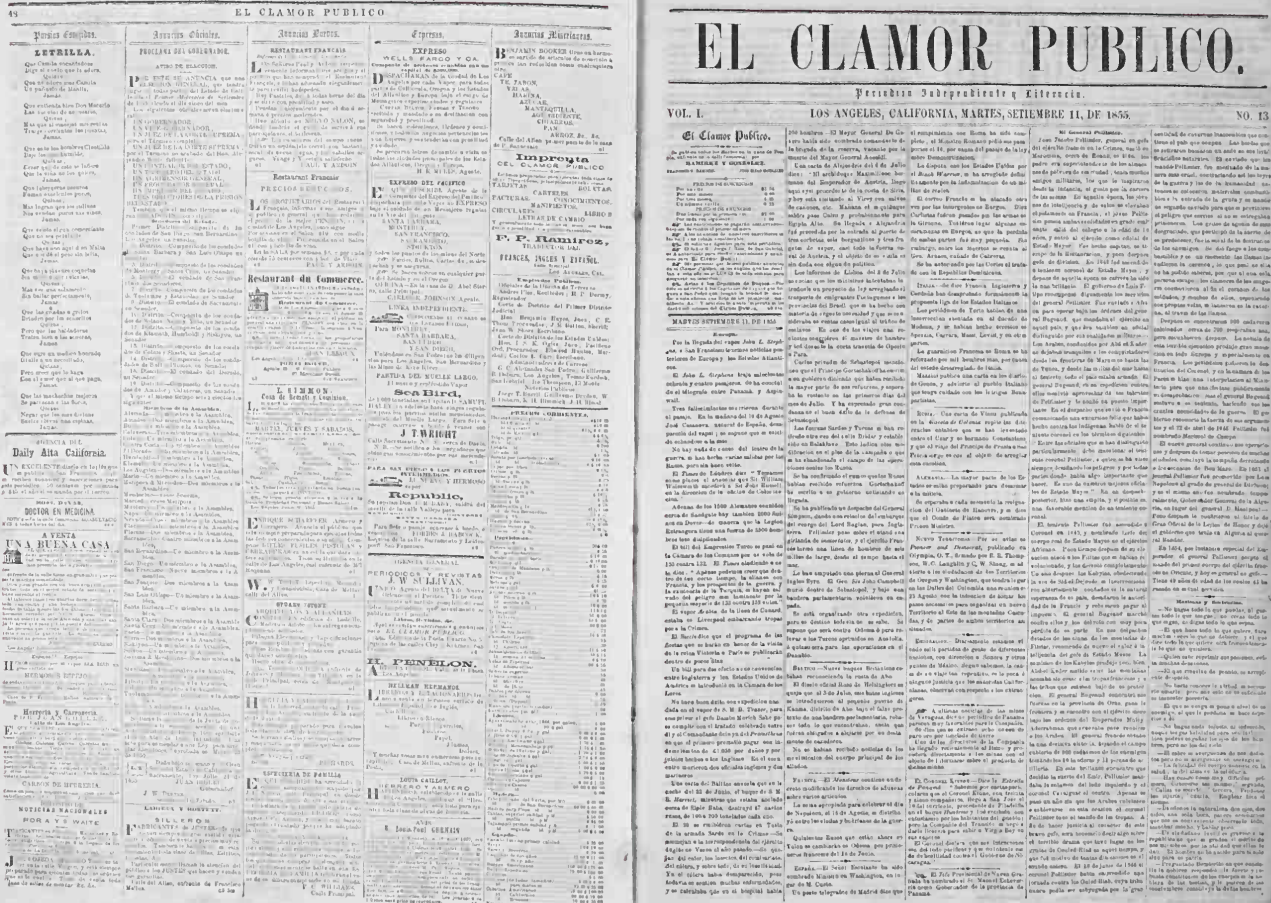
In the 1830s, Mexican California was embroiled in power struggles between north and south. Norteños and sureños vied for land, cattle, and spoils from secularization of the missions. This decree documents competition for the provincial capital.

In the first and one of the rarest printed items relating to Los Angeles, this origi-

nal decree from 1835 in the California Historical Society's collections elevated the pueblo of Los Angeles to the dignity of a city and also declared it capital of the territory. California's diputado to congress, José Antonio Carrillo, was responsible, and "so well pleased was Don José Antonio with this achievement in behalf of his town, that he secured an impression from type on white satin, which, tastefully bordered in blue, perhaps by Senora

Carrillo" was in H. H. Bancroft's collection in 1885.¹ But it was not to be: The people of Monterey would have none of it, citing that their city had been capital for more than seventy years, that it was only fitting and proper that a port should be the capital, and that territorial interests demanded that Monterey retain the honor, among other reasons.²

(Continued on page 82)



El Clamor Público

"About the second week of June 1855 appeared the first Spanish newspaper in Los Angeles under the American régime," remembered local Jewish merchant Harris Newmark (1834-1916). "It was called El Clamor Público, and made its appeal, socially, to the better class of native Californians"—its editor noted in the first issue, however, that "foreigners have demonstrated much more fervor in subscribing to the paper than the Californios themselves."

Although he sometimes lost patience with his audience, "today we respectfully greet the public," the young Francisco P. Ramírez wrote in the first issue of his newspaper. His modest tone belied his huge

ambition and his great achievement—founding not only the first Spanish-language newspaper in Los Angeles but an enduring social document that chronicles the city's transition from a Mexican pueblo to an American city.

Selling subscriptions at five dollars a year (the same rate as the English-language Los Angeles Star), Ramírez set the type himself in his printing offices near Alameda and Aliso streets. Printed on one sheet, the four-page newspaper appeared every Saturday.

El Clamor Público was funded through subscriptions and advertisements (two dollars for ten lines). Ramírez also made

money by printing laws in Spanish for the city of Los Angeles and publishing ordinances and official notes for the state.

All but nine months of the four-year run of the newspaper survive. The Huntington Library holds 233 issues, all of which have been digitized and can be found online through USC's Digital Archive: <http://www.usc.edu/arc/digarchives>.

By the end of 1859 the paper went bankrupt. Harris Newmark observed that although "Ramírez was an able journalist and a good typo . . . the Clamor, on December 31st, 1859, went the way of so many local journals" and folded.

COURTESY OF THE HUNTINGTON LIBRARY

Introduction

By Félix Gutiérrez, José Luis Benavides, William Deverell

“El Clamor Público was a public defender speaking out against unfair administration, the manipulation of juries, corrupt practices, and the prejudiced application of the law. It also sought to inform and instruct the Mexican people on civics as well as the basics of statute and emigration law. . . . [Francisco] Ramírez loudly and frequently stated that though life had been poorer, matters were a lot better off before 1848 and he used a phrase that would not be heard again, *this land is our land.*” (Juan Gómez-Quíñones)

Christopher Waldrep based much of the research for his influential 2002 book, *The Many Faces of Judge Lynch*, on newspaper accounts of lynching and cast the racial aspects of such mass violence as primarily a black and white phenomenon. He credits African American activists and journalists such as Ida B. Wells for developing an awareness that led the U.S. Senate to declare in 2005 that “lynching succeeded slavery as the ultimate expression of racism in the United States following Reconstruction.” It was the African American journalists of the 1880s and 1890s who “persuaded Americans to think of lynching as racial.”

While Waldrep’s analysis and acknowledgment of the fine work of Wells and other African American journalists is factually correct, his understanding of the role of the press in identifying and labeling such acts of public violence is limited by his sources. His work is based on a careful examination of English-language newspapers across the country, including California, and

therefore is limited in both coverage and perspective by the language of those newspapers. Had he reviewed Spanish-language newspapers in California and other parts of the Southwest following the United States’ 1846–48 war against Mexico, he would have found that Latino journalists had a racial understanding of extralegal violence long before African American journalists did so in the post-Reconstruction era, and he could have provided his readers with a richer understanding of the racial nature of lynchings.

Use of such sources might destroy the idea that lynchings were not seen as racial violence until the 1880s and 1890s. They also would help develop a richer understanding of the consequences of extralegal violence beyond the black/white paradigm that dominates much of the retelling of this country’s racial history. And finally, use of Spanish-language newspapers would help build an understanding of the importance of Latino

journalists and their nineteenth-century publications in helping resist extralegal violence against targeted racial and ethnic groups.

Following the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, lynchings and other forms of sanctioned violence targeting members of certain races and ethnicities were common in California. Less than a decade after Los Angeles residents had seen the border between the United States and Mexico redrawn, placing them inside the United States, Californios were treated as strangers in their own land. Caught between two nations and two cultures, they found themselves living in an Anglo system they did not understand and that, in turn, showed little desire to understand them or their Latino ways.

The lynchings, squatters, and the imposition of a new language, culture, and legal system made the years following the United States–Mexico War of 1846 to 1848 violent and unpleasant for Spanish-speaking residents in the lands stretching from Arkansas and Louisiana west to the Pacific Ocean and as far north as Wyoming. In the name of, and adherence to, Manifest Destiny, the United States had waged a war of conquest to acquire these territories and the prized San Francisco Bay as its Pacific outpost.

But along with the geographic growth of mountains, prairies, and deserts, the United States also experienced a demographic growth of thousands of Tejanos in Texas, Hispanos in New Mexico, and Californios in California. American treaty negotiators promised their Mexican counterparts that the rights of former Mexican citizens would be respected. But the U.S. Senate canceled provisions in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo enumerating those rights. The result: a victorious minority was in power over a vanquished majority.

Many Anglos came to California during and after the war infused with a desire to exploit natural

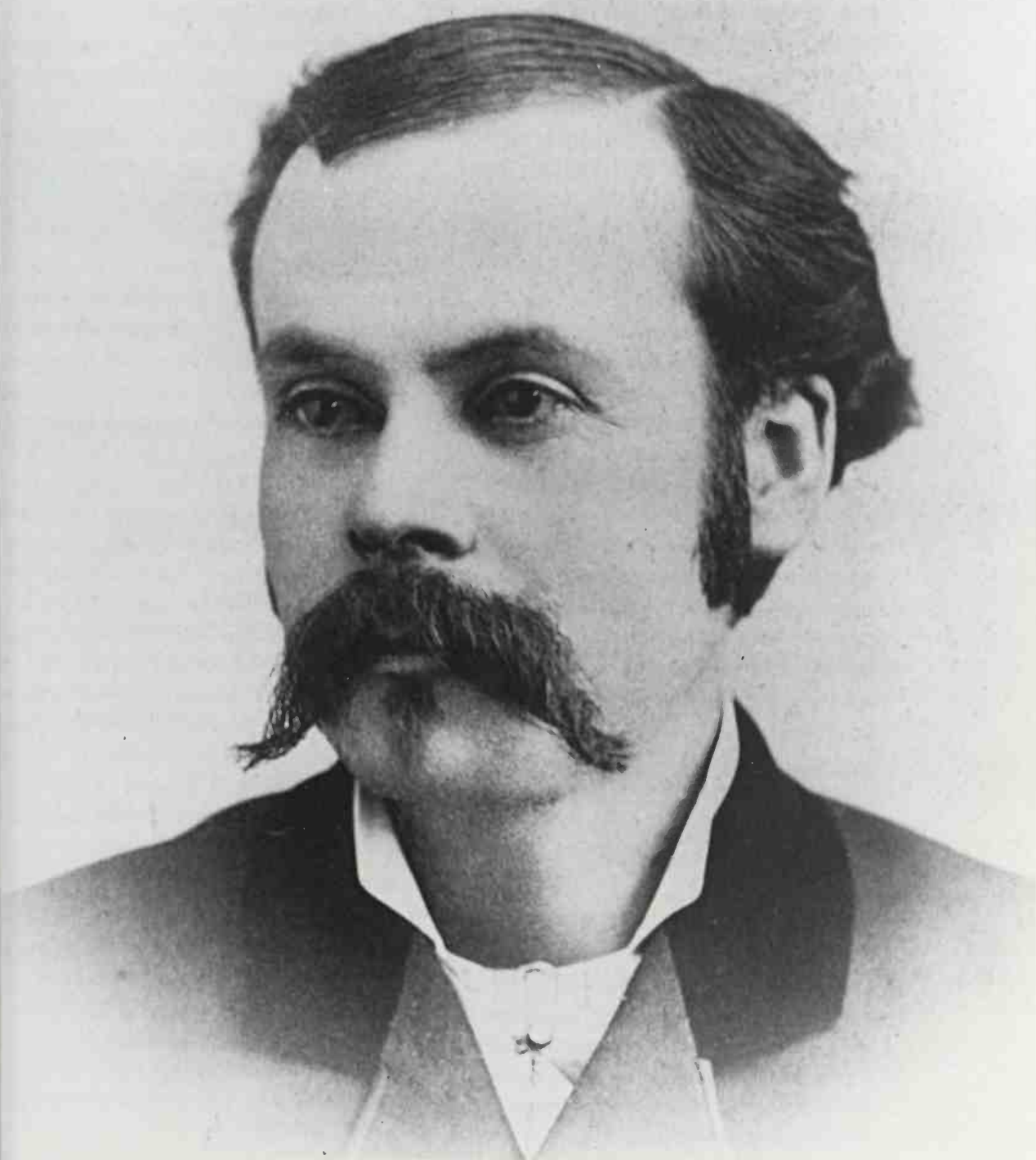
resources that had been held by what they saw as people of an undeserving race. In his 1840 book, *Two Years Before the Mast*, Richard Henry Dana portrayed the Californios as too lazy to develop their own lands and, noting the good climate and harbor, wrote “nothing but the character of the people prevents Monterey from becoming a great town.” Four years later, Illinois lawyer and travel writer Thomas Jefferson Farnham observed in a book on his California travels, “The Californios are an imbecile, pusillanimous race of men, and unfit to control the destinies of that beautiful country.” Once the U.S. declared war on Mexico in 1846, the Californios and their culture became enemies to be conquered and vanquished.

“We hope that the U.S. will keep a fast grip on California,” wrote future literary giant Walt Whitman in the *Brooklyn Eagle* two months after the war began. “What has miserable, inefficient Mexico, with her suspicion, her burlesque upon freedom, her actual tyranny by the few over the many—what has she to do with the great mission of peopling the new world with a noble race? Be it ours, to achieve that mission!”

After the war, Californios were among the first to face the realities of being Latino in an Anglo world. They looked to writers and journalists for guidance. In the years following the war, journalism flourished in both Spanish and English in

Like many educated Californios, Francisco P. Ramírez at first welcomed the ideals of equality, democracy, and civil liberties outlined in the U.S. Constitution. He was disappointed—and said so vehemently in his editorials in El Clamor Público—when the Yanquis espousing those ideals trampled on the rights of his people. Yet he never ceased to celebrate the Constitution and highly valued its rights to freedom of expression and freedom of the press.

COURTESY OF THE SEAVER CENTER FOR WESTERN
HISTORY RESEARCH



the territories taken from Mexico. One directory lists 132 Spanish-language or bilingual newspapers published between 1848 and 1900 in what had become the southwestern United States. Some found guidance in the words of Francisco P. Ramírez, teenage editor of the first Spanish-language newspaper of Los Angeles, *El Clamor Público* (The Public Outcry), founded in June 1855. Like many educated Californios, Ramírez first welcomed the ideals of equality, democracy, and civil liberties espoused in the U.S. Constitution. But he was disappointed when the Yanquis espousing those ideals trampled on the rights of his people.

"The North Americans pretend to give us lessons in humanity and to bring to our people the doctrine of salvation so we can govern ourselves, to respect the laws and conserve order. Are these the ones who treat us worse than slaves?" he wrote in a September 1855 article condemning lynchings of Mexicanos. In his May 10, 1856, edition, he wrote, "California has fallen into the hands of the ambitious sons of North America, who will not stop until they have satisfied their passions, by driving the first occupants of the land out of the country, vilifying their religion, and disfiguring their customs."

El Clamor Público's commitment to civil liberties often irritated its English-language counterpart, the *Los Angeles Star*, whose Spanish-language section Ramírez had edited before launching his own newspaper. The *Star* even accused him of exaggerating the Californios' plight and stirring up racial hatreds. Ramírez also kept an eye on the *Star*, complaining when that newspaper reported the "tendencies of our Mexican population toward armed riot, scuffling, and robbery." Ramírez commented that it was unfair to insult all Mexicans via the "depraved imagination" of the *Star* and thanked the better classes of Norteamericanos for being more fair-minded.

El Clamor Público reflected and disseminated the open-minded views of liberal thinkers of the times. Ramírez advocated public education for all, including girls, so they would not be infantile or merely subservient to their husbands. The paper's advocacy on behalf of African Americans caused the *San Francisco Herald* to label it the most violent of all the "Free Nigger organs" in the state during the 1856 elections. Ramírez opposed the extension of slavery to new territories, such as California, and slavery itself. He also fought proposed laws limiting the rights of free Blacks in the state.

Although taking on wider battles, Ramírez never lost sight of the harsh realities he and his readers were facing, including the potential loss of their lands. Spanish and Mexican authorities had made more than eight hundred land grants in California. Unlike grantees in other parts of the newly acquired territories, Californios were required to defend their titles before a special federal land commission appointed in 1851 and, sometimes, federal district courts and the U.S. Supreme Court. Squatters, land swindlers, and crafty lawyers steadily whittled away at Californios' land holdings during the prolonged and expensive proceedings. When titles were confirmed, successful grantees often had to give up their land to pay the attorneys or to reimburse squatters for improvements made on their property. "When they receive patent, if they are not already ruined, they will be very close to it," *El Clamor Público* complained on August 15, 1857.

Ramírez's frustrations grew as the injustices around him increased. "Oh! Fatalidad!" he protested in an August 1856 editorial: "Mexicans alone have been the victims of the people's insane fury! Mexicans alone have been sacrificed on the gibbet and launched into eternity . . . ! This is the liberty and equality of our adopted land! Examine the

state's history since the discovery of gold and one must conclude that 'California is lost to all Spanish-Americans.' "

Such editorial crusading irritated at least one Anglo who considered himself a friend of the Californios. In 1857, Los Angeles Assemblyman Joseph Lancaster Brent said *El Clamor Público* was "disseminating sentiments of treason and antipathy among the native population." Ramírez struck back editorially, asking if it was treason to describe the "tremors of 'a thousand hearts . . . a thousand eyes filled with tears . . . a thousand hands' of the Californios who see their fathers and brothers tortured in the presence of innocent children?"

Ramírez did not place all blame on the Anglos. He called upon his own people to learn to deal with the newcomers on their own terms and demand their rights. And as time went on, he exhorted those who stayed to learn the ways of the conqueror and use the new system for their own benefit.

"And you, imbecile Californios! You are to blame for the lamentations that we are witnessing. We are tired of saying: open your eyes, and it is time that we demand our rights and interests. It is with shame that we say, and difficult to confess it: you are the sarcasm of humanity!" Ramírez chastised his readers for not voting and for putting up with indignities. Until they cared, they would never cast off the "yoke of slavery," he warned in December 1858.

The year 2005 marked the 150th anniversary of *El Clamor Público*. In commemoration of that anniversary and recognition of the important role played by that newspaper and subsequent Latino media in California, the Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West, the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California, California

State University Northridge, and the Haynes Foundation sponsored an international conference at the Huntington Library in San Marino. The conference featured presentations by a group of distinguished scholars in history, journalism, and history. We are grateful for the support we received for the conference and for this special issue of *California History*.

We are delighted to share most of these presentations in this special issue of *California History* so that a wider audience may have a greater understanding of how Francisco P. Ramírez and *El Clamor Público* reported and reflected on what was happening in California and beyond in the years immediately following the U.S. conquest. This includes an examination of the newspaper's views of U.S. ambitions on Latin America and reflections of Pan Americanism by Nicolás Kanellos, a biography and analysis of Francisco P. Ramírez and his life by Paul Gray, an examination of *El Clamor Público's* coverage of racial and ethnic relations in California in this era by José Luis Benavides, and a descriptive analysis of lynchings and other public displays of organized violence targeting Californios and others by Coya Paz Brownrigg. Accompanying each of these articles are brief essays highlighting key areas of coverage in *El Clamor Público* by Rodolfo Acuña and examples of the periodical's literary contributions and reflections analyzed by Armando Miguélez. Taken together, these erudite and sensitive analyses help us to better understand the social, political, and racial realities of California in the tumultuous mid-nineteenth century. They also bring into sharp focus the life and passions of a crusading journalist and his short-lived "public clamor."

El Clamor Público

Resisting the American Empire

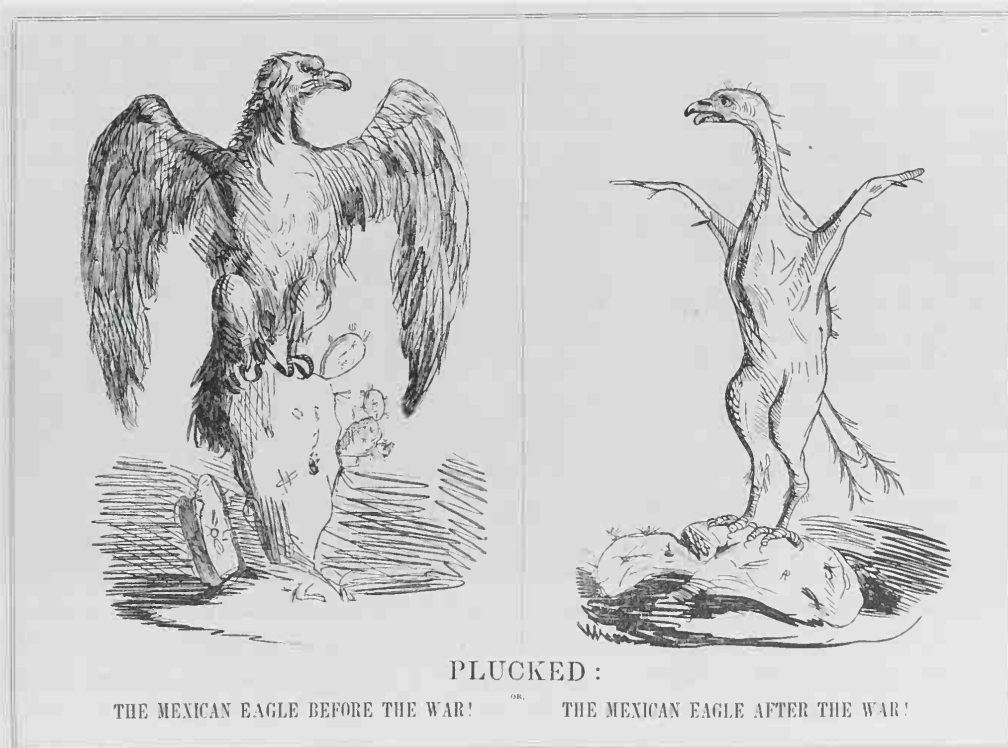
BY NICOLÁS KANELLOS

El Clamor Público was run by just one man: one man reading and researching the newspapers brought in by steamship and stage coach, selecting from their pages news to be translated and reprinted, and gathering a small sampling of local news. One man hand-setting the type himself and forcefully, even aggressively, expressing personal opinions on the issues that the editor/publisher believed mattered most, or personally wanted to matter most, to his readers. Precisely because of Ramírez's Spanish-English-French trilingualism and his access to newspapers from throughout the hemisphere, he was able to develop a broad understanding of the intentions and effects of U.S. imperialism on Mexico, Central America, and the rest of the hemisphere to the South.

Like so many other frontier editors, Francisco Ramírez never ceased to celebrate the U.S. Constitution and its benefits for American citizens. Although from the outset of his newspaper career Ramírez perceived a glaring disjuncture between the rights promised to citizens and those that the native Californios actually received, he highly valued the acquired rights that came with U.S. governance, specifically and most dearly, freedom of expression and freedom of the press. These rights he tested with every issue of his newspaper. Also, like many a frontier editor, he

tions he took in his editorials, positions that frequently challenged the ideology of Manifest Destiny. He sought to link this ideology to American imperialism, with its attendant, rampant racism and genocidal tendencies. It did not hail the glories of U.S. filibustering, territorial conquest, and expansionism that had resulted in California becoming a state and Mexico, considered by Ramírez as "our old homeland" ("nuestra antigua patria"), losing half of its national territory. Ramírez did not side with the majority of frontier editors, many of whom had originated in the southern United States, on the continuation or expansion of slavery.¹ Although, like many Californios and Spanish Americans, he was usually negative toward Native Americans, he never called for their control and extermination, as did the Anglo press.² And, of course, *El Clamor Público's* greatest distinction of all was that it was southern California's first Spanish-language newspaper, run solely by a native Hispanic Californian, serving his local Spanish-speaking community. While the few other newspapers publishing in the state at that time often had a Spanish-language page, there was no other Spanish-language newsprint in southern California that existed independent of Anglo-American or French control and solely beholden to the Spanish-speaking community.³

It will become clear that, despite its embracing of the U.S. Constitution and the system of partisan politics, *El Clamor Público* became an organ of resistance to the expanding American empire. As such, this very early periodical achieved a level of social and political analysis that was well beyond the years of its young editor and even beyond what Hispanic intellectuals in Texas, the



El Clamor Público was an organ of resistance to the expanding American empire and publisher Francisco P. Ramírez struggled to define where his community stood at its margins. When he began publishing the newspaper in 1853, Californios had been “foreigners in their own country” for less than five years.

Yankee Doodle, one of the first satirical weeklies published in the United States, supported nationalistic fervor in 1847 with “Plucked or, The Mexican eagle before the war! The Mexican eagle after the war!”

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eastern seaboard, and much of Spanish America were concluding at this time. Many contemporary Hispanic intellectuals, both in the United States and Spanish America, had just participated in liberating their countries from the Spanish imperial yoke, employing the ideas they had assimilated from the American founding fathers and the U. S. Constitution; the afterglow of the creation of the United States as the first, model republic, was still burning bright as the Spanish American republics were confronting the disorders, wars, and invasions following the establishment of their own independence. And both Cuba and Puerto Rico were still struggling for their liberation from Spain, relying on U.S. intervention in one form or another.

Francisco Ramírez understood the discourse and dynamic of empire, even before the United States added an exclamation point to the era of Manifest Destiny with the 1898 economic, military and political subjugation of peoples and territories in the Caribbean, Central America, and the far-off Pacific. What has not been fully understood about Ramírez, however, is how he struggled in his attempts to define his community at the margin of the expanding American empire; how he further struggled, thus, to defend it against the second wave of imperialist onslaught in the form of rapid immigration from the East and the overwhelming ideology of Anglo superiority that was proclaiming all things Mexican and Hispanic as

inferior, backward, mongrel, bastard, and, therefore, worthy of obliteration from the face of the Earth. As Ramírez himself once stated, what some Anglos wanted was for all Mexicans to have just one neck that could collectively be severed: “que los Mexicanos todos no tuvieran más que un solo pescuezo para cortárselo.”⁴

In the early pages of *El Clamor Público*, Ramírez was not as yet clear as to exactly who or what his community was. At first, he directed his efforts to the people he called “californios,” “nativos californios,” “la raza española,” “de ascendencia española,” “la comunidad española.”⁵ When he used the term “mexicanos,” he was probably referring to Mexican immigrants. “Hispanoamericanos” for him referred to all Hispanic-origin peoples, both immigrants and natives. Gradually, he began to foment and promote a unity of both the natives and the immigrant “hispanoamericanos,” even entitling an editorial “A Nuestros Conciudadanos Hispanoamericanos” (“To Our Fellow Hispanic American Citizens”). By the time he closed shop on *El Clamor Público* on December 31, 1859, he included his own Californio community in what he called “Hispano-América” and “La América Española,” despite its recent political incorporation within the Anglo-American empire. As José Martí would later phrase it, the Californios and “conciudadanos hispanoamericanos” were residing “in the belly of the beast.” At closure of his newspaper, Ramírez stated that his mission had been “the defense of the moral and material interests of southern California . . . at the service of my native California compatriots, generally, of all the *hispano-americanos*.”⁶ Throughout the five years of his editorializing, Ramírez was wont to refer to these readers and communities in the first person plural, using such adjectives and pronouns as “nosotros,” “nuestros,” “nuestro pueblo,” “nuestra raza,”⁷ thus solidifying the community identity, claiming his membership in that community and positioning his *El Clamor Público* as its voice. That Ramírez had intended *El Clamor Público* to become this site of identity formation and enunciation from the very beginning, as

well as protector and defender of the Californios, is evident from his naming the paper “the public outcry.”⁸ In addition, Ramírez, like his contemporaries, Californio leader Pablo de la Guerra and Texan Juan Seguin, also referred to his disenfranchised group as “foreigners in their own land” (“extranjeros en su propia tierra”).⁹

Historian Rodolfo Acuña has seen Ramírez as evolving from “an assimilationist to a nationalist.”¹⁰ However, from the beginning, Ramírez exerted resistance to Anglo-American encroachment and domination even while celebrating the U. S. Constitution and the other benefits of American liberties and rights. Throughout the years of *El Clamor Público*’s publication, he always struggled to define his community in the face of growing Anglo domination. Ultimately, he developed a transnational consciousness, even to the extent of promoting Pan Hispanism. During the life of *El Clamor Público* and afterward, Ramírez continuously crossed borders, territorially as well as culturally and politically, in his search for community and nation. It was an odyssey that led him to embrace the broadest Hispanic constituency possible, in opposition to the Colossus of the North.

The following discussion will trace Ramírez’s intellectual journey from his opening editorial on June 19, 1855, when he addresses his readers as “¡Californios!” and “foreigners in their own country” (“extranjeros en su propio país”), up until his farewell, when he addresses them as “compatriotas nativos de California” (“native California compatriates”) and “todos los hispano-americanos” (“and all the Hispanic Americans”). From the very first issue, Ramírez sought to identify and build a concept of community with his Californios, people he defined as natives to California who traced their lineage back to the Spanish settlers: people “of Spanish descent” (“de ascendencia española”) or “Spanish culture” (“raza española”). However, we know that he did not mean pure European racial stock when he employed the term “raza,” but was referring more to culture and historical antecedents. It is especially clear that he included



"Many of the elder Californios who some six years ago saw themselves tranquilly enjoying the ownership of the lands left to them by their parents now see themselves in the most lamentable poverty," protested Ramírez in 1855. In contesting the expropriation of Californio land, Ramírez challenged state and federal laws that were passed against their land tenure in favor of newly arrived American settlers.

JAMES WALKER, *CATTLE DRIVE #1* (ca. 1877).

OIL ON CANVAS

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, GIFT OF
MR. AND MRS. REGINALD WALKER

such mixed-race Californios as Andrés Pico in this group and was aware of the extensive racial mixing (in Anglo-American terms) that made up Californio biological history. He also defined this group by its issues, which gained frequent coverage and editorial comment, even coverage through reprinting articles from such San Francisco newspapers as *El Eco del Pacífico* and *La Crónica*. Those issues included, first and foremost, the Californios' right to life and property, which Ramírez not only argued by using the U.S. Constitution as a base, but also by addressing the violence and lynching visited on Californios. In contesting the expropriation of lands, Ramírez challenged state and federal laws that were passed against Californio land tenure and in favor of squatters' rights and court intervention to confirm titles and land grants.

As Californios were continuously dispossessed of their lands, Ramírez decried, "The people are struggling under the oppression of the judges, and so effective have been the injustices committed by them . . . what good does it do for a man to possess something, while being exposed to losing it all because of legal technicalities or the maliciousness of judges and their

conspirers?"¹¹ Referring to state laws passed to protect squatters and settlers, on April 5, 1856, he rebutted, "Here we have the licentiousness and immorality that, as of seven years ago [since the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo], isolates and destroys the interests of honorable families, authorized now by a state law! Is there no limit to the arbitrariness of the strong over the weak, of the conqueror over the conquered!"¹² And on June 14 that same year, he took on the legislature frontally: ". . . a legislature as hungry as it is unjust has decreed that all the lands will be considered public property. . . . Can there be a more bald-faced affront to the solemn treaty of Hidalgo!"¹³ He continued: "Many of the elder Californios who some six years ago saw themselves tranquilly enjoying the ownership of the lands left to them by their parents now see themselves in the most lamentable poverty and indigence because of the litigation they have been subjected to in order to prove their land titles."¹⁴

Ramírez also crusaded for division of California into two states to ensure the political and economic power that would accrue to the denser Californio population in southern California. The

issue was also related to taxation, with southern California paying up to thirty-five times more taxes per person than those living in the northern counties, which also had more legislators in the state assembly; the inequity resulted from the high tax assessment placed on heads of cattle, the major economic base of southern California.¹⁵

Ramírez did not take on Protestantism, though he repeatedly covered Catholic Church news and festivities and penned scathing editorials against the Mormons, warning of their politics and cultural influence. As important as were language and Hispanic culture in defining his community, it was the ancestral territory and legal treaties, he believed, that could not be contravened as the basis for his people's existence and rights. Thus Ramírez also based the definition of his people on the rights vouchsafed by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the war between the United States and Mexico and ensured the rights of the Californios to American citizenship and protection of their property and civil rights. In addition to his frequent references to this treaty, he made one of the rare early references to his people as "Mexicans" in his editorial commemorating Mexican Independence Day, in which once again he reviewed Californio history: "Mexicans! The time has now come for us to show the entire world that we merit the land on which we were born. More than any other people, we have certain indisputable rights in the nation where we now live. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo has conceded to us broad privileges to freely enjoy our rights and property."¹⁶

Ramírez's Californio readership and community, thusly, was initially defined by heritage, language, American citizenship, religion, treaty, territory, and land tenure. In his editorial "La Guerra de las Razas" ("The War of the Races")¹⁷ Ramírez warned against reducing the Californio and Hispanic issues to a conflict of "them" and "us," Anglo versus Hispanic. In many of his other columns, however, he blamed the influx of Anglo and European adventurers and criminals, as well as indict the overwhelming majority of state

legislators, U.S. congressmen, and presidents of the United States, for the dispossession and ill treatment of Californios.¹⁸ This constant threat coming from outside the conceptual domain and rights inherited by the Californios also helped define what Benedict Anderson¹⁹ would call Ramírez's "imagined nation," a community that he characterized as under siege, on the newspaper's first anniversary: "... we (meaning "I") have mainly endeavored to serve as an organ serving the general sentiments in order to manifest the atrocious injuries suffered by the *raza española* in this country, where they were born and in which they see themselves in a status lower than even their most unfortunate persecutors."²⁰

In the course of publishing *El Clamor Público*, Ramírez continuously broadened his view to recognize the conditions that Californios shared with Hispanic immigrants—made up principally of Mexicans, Chileans, Peruvians, and Nicaraguans—and to evolve an understanding and an ideological posture that was more representative of colonial resistance to expanding imperial power. In great part, Ramírez's crusade against the Know Nothing Party and its virulent nativism was in defense of Spanish American immigrants: "Since the appearance of Know-Nothingism in U.S. politics, foreign immigration has decreased considerably."²¹ His calls for union among the diverse groups in the Hispanic population became more frequent and desperate in order try to assume some power, at least through voting and electing better representation.²²

Ramírez was also acutely aware that American filibustering had played a great role in Mexico's loss of its northern territory and that continued filibustering threatened to dislodge additional large segments from the Mexican nation. As early as March 10, 1855, *El Clamor Público* published a reprint from the *Buffalo Patriot* discussing the feasibility of annexing perhaps all of Mexico and policing the subjugated population. Ramírez was actively attempting to raise the level of consciousness of his readers as to the *modus operandi* of U.S. imperialism: filibustering missions in advance of revolutionary and separatist and independence

movements, financed by the U. S. business and government interests and, finally, annexation to the United States: "Our readers ill understand that upon making these observations about how these filibustering expeditions are organized in the United States of America. First of all they were going to alienate a portion of Canada—then Texas and other parts of Mexico—and finally Cuba. Now, Nicaragua is in their sights and ambition." In fact, the United States had supported Cuba's revolutionary movements and had even tendered offers to buy Cuba²⁴ from Spain to annex the island as a slave state—the subject of a later Ramírez blast against President Buchanan.²⁵ But the closest impact of this filibustering was reported and declaimed by Ramírez regarding U.S.-backed filibustering in Sonora to obtain better access to the mineral wealth in that region, as well as the Gadsden Purchase.

The notorious William Walker filibustering affair occupied scores of inches of *El Clamor Público's* editorial vitriol. As early as August 28, 1855, Ramírez had linked Walker to the tradition of Anglo-Saxon piracy—in fact, the term "filibusters" originally referred to buccaneers. For more than a year he commented on Walker's filibustering missions in Sonora and Baja California, and his bloody adventure on the way to becoming "president" of Nicaragua. The turning point in Ramírez's attitude toward U.S. citizenship and commitment to win a place for his people within the state of California may have been when President Pierce recognized Walker's government.²⁶

It is my contention that Ramírez's growing identification with Hispanic American immigrants and with *hispano-americanos* in general was related to his growing understanding that Californios were not exceptional in their relationship to the United States, that they were just like their brother *tejanos* and *nuevomexicanos*, who had become colonized and oppressed under American imperialist expansion, and that the rest of Spanish America would fall victim to the same destiny. During 1857 and until the closure of *El Clamor Público*, Ramírez was more and more convinced



The notorious William Walker filibustering affair occupied scores of inches of El Clamor Público's editorial vitriol. As early as August 28, 1855, Ramírez had linked Walker to the tradition of Anglo-Saxon piracy. For more than a year he commented on Walker's filibustering missions in Sonora and Baja, California, and his bloody adventure on the way to becoming "president" of Nicaragua. The turning point in Ramírez's attitude toward U.S. citizenship and commitment to win a place for his people within the state of California may have been when President Pierce recognized Walker's government.

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of the hemispheric aspirations of the United States at the expense of Spanish Americans, from Alta California to Tierra del Fuego. He forecast invasion, conquest, and annexation, as well as *hispano-americanos* being dispossessed of all they owned and converted to a landless errant people. In the March 3, 1857, edition of *El Clamor Público*, Ramírez published a letter directed to the state of Sonora, picking up from his previous hypothesis that "... in the end, Mexico would disappear from the catalog of nations, or would like a batch of briar patches, sold at retail by the piece and by the yard, or like slices of cheese."²⁷ An article that appears on the same day, entitled "La Actual Situación—Sonora—Baja California—Ambición de América del Norte, etc.," links the situation in California, Arizona's Gadsden Purchase and filibustering in Sonora to the destiny of all of Latin

YANQUI EXPANSION INTO LATIN AMERICA

BY RODOLFO F. ACUÑA

On June 19, 1855, Francisco P. Ramírez' editorials had a moderate tone, calling for justice within the system and recognizing that California was now part of the United States. Ramírez asked the Californios for financial support for his newspaper, writing that a free press was their best guarantee of liberty. The young publisher pledged his paper to an independent course, promising that the newspaper would "uphold the Constitution of the United States, convinced that only through it will we obtain liberty. . . . We shall combat all those opposed to its magnanimous spirit and grand ideas." Ramírez's editorials soon changed in tone, however, and his coverage became more nationalistic as he took sides. In an article on the filibusterer William Walker, who had set himself up as president of Nicaragua, Ramírez commented that "World history tells us that the Anglo-Saxons were in the beginning thieves and pirates, the same as other nations in their infancy . . . [but] the pirate instinct of old Anglo-Saxons is still active."

Throughout the paper's run Walker was the prototype of the European American "pirate" — politicians and filibusters — who had designs on Mexico or Latin America. In September 1855 Ramírez reprinted an article that questioned:

Who is the foreigner in California? . . . The North Americans pretend to give us lessons in humanity and to bring to our people the doctrine of salvation so we can govern ourselves, to respect the laws and conserve order. Are these the ones who treat us worse than slaves?

America: "beginning with the cowardly Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and with the unnecessary sale of Mesilla, North America has become so vain and infatuated with itself as to believe it has been called upon to dominate the entire American Continent (read: the Americas)."²⁸ The article presents an overview of the population, riches, and vulnerabilities, as much of Spanish America as of the United States. Ramírez calculates the population of Latin America as exceeding that of the United States by some fifteen million inhabitants and Latin America exceeding U.S. territory by some 1.5 million square leagues, land that he estimates contains some of the richest resources in the entire hemisphere. Ramírez calls for Latin American unity in the face of U.S. expansionism and advises Latin America to close its ports and commerce to the United States and forge commercial and political alliances with the Mediterranean states of Europe, with whom Latin America has so much in common. He further categorizes U.S. expansionist adventures as quixotic and warns that California may be precisely the place where the United States is most vulnerable because of the alienation of the Latin American population in that state.

Through the remainder of 1857 until the closing of *El Clamor Público*, Ramírez devoted a great deal of attention to the efforts in Central and South America to forge an Hispanic American alliance, even to the extent of reprinting on May 16, 1857, the entire treaty signed in Washington, D.C. His coverage of the issue not only brought him to an outright comparison of the United States with the ancient Roman Empire, in an article entitled "El Imperio de los Estados Unidos," but also included reprint articles from newspapers in the major cities of Central and South America.²⁹ Ramírez finally achieved an integrated vision of U.S. imperialism and Hispanic Americans in the United States and south of the border to the tip of Tierra del Fuego in his June 6, 1858, masterly essay, "Los Estados Unidos e Hispano-América," which merits an extensive quotation to convey the eloquence and sophistication of Ramírez's analysis:

In the land of Washington and Franklin, where at every juncture human rights as well as the natural way people live are violated, and the sovereignty of nations is invaded. The recent conquests effected in Mexico, dismembering half of the national territory, the scandalous events in Central America, the unjust initiatives against the natives of Panama in New Granada (Colombia), the protests from the Las Aves Island in Venezuela, the Galapagos in Ecuador and Lobris in Peru, the initiatives against the Antilles, be they through force of arms or through separatist movements, which in the language of morality spoken by nations is the ultimate expression of ignominy, etc. etc. . . . Here is a compendium of maps outlined in the over-abundant imagination of the Great Federal Republic, which will extend down to Buenos Aires if its course of conquest is not blocked. Is that fusion of peoples and languages, customs and religions a practical base on which to establish one lone people made up of one hundred different nations, absorbing the Latin states and broadening continental democracy to the detriment of its neighbors' interests? No, a thousand times, no is the people's cry and, no, a thousand times no is the echo repeated by all the descendants of Gonzalo de Córdoba and El Cid against this pernicious tendency protected by its laws and principles; each *hispano-americano*, like an eternal Hanibal everywhere will fight to avenge the rapine and usurpation of their fatherland. . . .³⁰

Ramírez ends this essay by comparing American expansionism to that of France under Napoleon and foretells the ultimate failure of U.S. conquest and imperialism. The evolution to this broader vision of *la raza latina* was both ideological and personal for Ramírez. As noted above, from the outset, Ramírez's defense of the Californios was a motivation for his publishing *El Clamor Público*. The mistreatment of Californios and *hispano-*

americanos that he documented in the newspapers' pages formed a leitmotiv throughout the years. On May 10, 1856, Ramírez began making the case for emigrating from California to Sonora:

California has fallen into the hands of the ambitious sons of North America, who will not abandon it until they have satiated their passions, outraged the first holders of this country's land, vilified their religion and besmirched their customs. The injustices that are repeated each day represent one more reason for the unfortunate citizens of Mexico—who have always demonstrated their pure patriotism and who have sacrificed themselves in order to save the fatherland from inevitable ruin, consenting to be alienated with their property within the Republic of the United States—to go elsewhere to peacefully enjoy the fruits of their labors."³¹

Again on July 7, 1855, he repeated the call for emigration: ". . . the Mexicans residing in California are resolved to emigrate to Sonora in order to flee this inhospitable country in which they have had to suffer so much. This emigration will be a stain on the history of the United States."³² With the September 18, 1855, reprinting of an article from San Francisco's *La Crónica*, entitled "Hospitalidad Californiana," Ramírez endorsed broadening his focus to all Spanish Americans residing in California—"the sons of South America and in general all of *la raza española*" ("los hijos de la América del Sur y en general toda la raza española")—and in the course of the next few years carefully monitored and endorsed plans for, not just Californios and Mexicans, but all Spanish Americans to emigrate from California to the Mexican state of Sonora to live their lives free of the persecution they experienced in California: ". . . all *hispano-americanos* have been subjected to a treatment that has no parallel in the history of any nation that has been conquered by either savages or civilized people. Everyone is convinced that *California is lost for all hispano-americanos*"³³ Throughout 1858 and 1859, Ramírez reported on

the meetings to organize the move of *hispano-americanos* to Sonora, and following the closure of *El Clamor Público*, Ramírez himself emigrated to that Mexican state.³⁴ Perhaps the straws that finally broke the proverbial camel's back were Ramírez losing his election bid for state assemblyman in 1859, as well as the financial problems that led to the demise of *El Clamor Público*.³⁵

Ramírez's evolution from a pioneering editor wishing to serve the needs of his Californios to an analyst of and defender against U.S. imperialism on an hemispheric scale, and ultimately a refugee from U.S. imperialism, has much to do with his stance as an editor and publisher. While he, too, benefited from the periodicals that were brought from the East by stage coach and steamship, Ramírez differed from the Anglo-American newspaper men in that he was actually tri-lingual—he not only read the French-language newspapers but often reprinted articles from them and at one point published a portion of his newspaper in French. Ramírez actually read the newspapers published in Spanish that were being shipped from Valparaíso, Lima, Managua, and Mexico City, as well as from Texas and the East Coast (he stated at one point that he was reading as many as fifty newspapers a week). He thus was able to develop a bicultural perspective (perhaps even a tri-cultural one) and achieve a broad overview of the historical and contemporary political movements both in the United States and Latin America. Ramírez's was an early understanding, forged on the anvil of personal experience as well as catholic reading tastes, of the dynamics of American imperialism and the threat it represented to Hispanic peoples throughout the hemisphere. His was precisely the kind of understanding that would later be enunciated in such foundational essays as Martí's "Nuestra América." Thus the implications of the system of thought developed by the young editor of a very modest frontier newspaper loom very large to us today.

EXCERPT:

"CRIME, LIKE A TREMULOUS FLASH OF LIGHTNING. . . SHOWS US WHERE WE CAN FIND SAFETY. . . ."

Here the author uses metaphors and bombastic language to express the need to eradicate lawlessness and defend the rule of law. He decries the lax attitude and the apathy of society in general towards criminal behavior and advocates individual responsibility for upholding the law. This editorial from El Clamor Público's February 14, 1857, issue is published on page that includes seven stories on murders in the area.

—Armando Miguélez

. . . It seems that only the grandest of crimes wake us from our lethargy and prods us into recognizing that there are dangers in our society that we must learn how to avoid. Crime, like a tremulous flash of lightning, shows us where, in the dark of night, we can find safety, order, and peace. Crime lifts its ugly

Aquí el autor utiliza metáforas y lenguaje grandilocuente para expresar la necesidad de erradicar el desorden y defender el reino de la ley. Condena la actitud negligente y apática de la sociedad en general hacia el comportamiento criminal y aboga por la responsabilidad individual para mantener la ley. El editorial se publica en una página que incluye siete artículos sobre crímenes en la zona.

—Armando Miguélez

. . . Parece que sólo los grandes crímenes nos despiertan del sueño para vigilar y cumplir con nuestro deber; para manifestar que hay peligros en nuestro sistema social, y cómo esos peligros pueden evitarse. El crimen, como la trémula luz del relámpago, nos enseña en esta eterna noche, el lugar donde reposa la seguridad, el orden y la paz. El crimen, con su diabólico aspecto, se ha presentado entre nosotros a anunciar su guarida favorita. El crimen, con el horrible testimonio que trae ante nuestras cortes de justicia, con los asesinatos violentos que perpetra a la luz del día, avisa con voz que

ead and shows us where it likes to lurk. We hear its horrendous tales in our courtrooms, tales of violent murders carried out in broad daylight, and like thunder, it warns those who live tranquilly in their homes, the rich who ignore public issues, that if they want to feel safe, they must make some sacrifice for the general good.

. . . Thus, is this not in itself sufficient reason to make an effort to prevent crime? Do these situations not show society its sins of omission, its sad need for laws, prisons, and nooses, and the danger to the general well-being that letting criminals go unpunished would pose? But something more is needed, something that goes beyond vengeance and justice. We must take greater care to prevent even the slightest hint of encouragement to those who would commit murderous crimes, because if there is no respect for reason and for compliance with the laws, it would be impossible to lead a decent life. Criminals should receive the punishment stipulated by law, and the innocent should not pay for the sins of others. We must also recognize

that in spite of everything, a perverted heart is always inclined toward evil. However, this excuse should not be used to erase crime from the popular awareness, because even in the greatest of societies, there are fetid swamps that should be drained and cultivated if the community wishes to avoid the deadly venom of their miasmatic exhalations.

Now, our duty as citizens is to uphold the law. No one has any right to the life of his fellow man. Let us not stain our hands with the blood of our brothers, but rather allow the authorities to fulfill their duties. Let us ignore those who perturb the peace and threaten society and humanity, for some day the curse of the entire world will fall upon them. If we do not respect the law, we are renouncing all sense of honor and respectability, and the result will be attacks on the law, the abolition of the courts, the destruction of our prisons, and the exaltation of hooliganism and treason.

(TRANSLATED BY CYNTHIA GIAMBRUNO)

ueno, a los que viven tranquilos en sus casas, a los ricos que se desentienden de los negocios públicos, que para conseguir su propia seguridad, debe hacer algún sacrificio para el bienestar general.

. ¿Y no habla esto bastante claro que se deben hacer esfuerzos para evitar el crimen? ¿No enseña a la sociedad cuáles son sus pecados de omisión, de sus tristes necesidades de leyes, cárceles y horcas, de lo peligroso que sería al bienestar general dejar impune a los criminales?, —pero todavía más de lo que se necesita —algo más que venganza y justicia, —esto es el mayor cuidado para evitar todos los alientos para la perpetración de los crímenes porque en reverencia por la razón y la obediencia a las leyes, no se podrá vivir decentemente. Que el criminal sufra la pena merecida según las leyes, y el inocente no pague las faltas de los otros. Admítase también que después de todo lo que pueda hacerse, un corazón pervertido siempre se inclina al mal. Pero que estas disculpas no se usen para borrar el

crimen de la conciencia popular: porque hay en medio de la más grande civilización pantanos espantosos que deben ser desaguados y cultivados si la comunidad desea evitar la mortífera ponzoña de sus miasmáticas exhalaciones.

Ahora nuestro deber como ciudadanos es sostener las leyes. Ninguno tiene derecho sobre la vida de su semejante. No manchemos las manos en la sangre de nuestros hermanos. Dejemos a las autoridades que cumplan con sus atribuciones. Dejemos a los perturbadores de la tranquilidad pública que ultrajen a la sociedad y a la humanidad; porque algún día caerá sobre ellos la maldición del mundo entero. Si no hemos de respetar las leyes, renunciemos primero a todo sentimiento de honor y respetabilidad—para ultrajar las leyes, abolir las cortes, destruir las cárceles, y levantar muy alto la enseña del pandillaje y la traición.

Francisco P. Ramirez

A Short Biography

BY PAUL BRYAN GRAY

The owner and editor of to *El Clamor Público* (The Public Outcry), Francisco P. Ramírez, was a brilliant and precocious seventeen-year old who published his Los Angeles journal as a champion of the Mexican people between 1855 and 1859.

At a time when a majority of the little town was Spanish-speaking, *El Clamor Público* offered a rich commentary on daily life in Los Angeles from a Mexican perspective. It chronicles a village gradually succumbing and adjusting to American domination.

To date, historical interest has focused on Ramírez as editor of *El Clamor Público* in the last half of the 1850s.¹ Although he remained a public figure in California for more than twenty years after closing his first newspaper, no attention has been given to his later life, and most of his career is completely unknown.²

Among scholars commenting on the lack of biographical material concerning California Mexicans has been Abraham Hoffman, who has identified significant figures from the past worthy of more attention. He notes that: "Another person more mentioned than profiled, was Francisco P. Ramírez, a figure who truly cries for more biographical information."³ Although brief and limited, this article will help rectify the situation by presenting a summary of Ramírez's life and attempting to resurrect his story from the shadows.

Francisco Ramírez was the child of Juan M. Ramírez and Petra Ávila. His grandfather, also named Francisco Ramírez, was a carpenter who arrived in Alta California in 1794 with a party of settlers from Sonora, Mexico. A native of Tepic, the elder Francisco Ramírez and his wife, Rosa Quijada, settled at the Mission Santa Barbara, where Juan M. Ramírez was born in 1801. By 1828, the latter had moved to Los Angeles and constructed an adobe residence on land acquired near the northeast corner of Alameda and Aliso streets. He married Petra Ávila, a member of a prominent family, in 1830. She was the granddaughter of Cornelio Ávila, a Sonoran who led a caravan of settlers from northern Mexico to Alta California in 1786. Petra's father, Francisco Ávila, was once mayor of Los Angeles and built the Ávila adobe in 1818.⁴ This structure still stands on Olvera Street and is the oldest house in the city.

Juan M. Ramírez did not accumulate much wealth in his lifetime. He had no family connections or political influence great enough to obtain one of the large land grants issued by Mexican governors. He used his modest parcel to grow grapes for commercial winemaking. His property adjoined the vineyards of Jean Louis Vignes, a prosperous French vintner who was a naturalized Mexican citizen. Ramírez developed a life-long camaraderie with Vignes, which led to close friendships with other members of a French community centered on Aliso Street.⁵

Francisco P. Ramírez was born in Los Angeles on February 9, 1837, the fourth of thirteen children.⁶ He grew up during an unstable period when Los Angeles was evolving from a remote adobe village



Francisco P. Ramírez was born in Mexican Los Angeles in 1837. His grandfather was a carpenter who moved first to Santa Barbara and then to Los Angeles from Sonora, Mexico, and family legend has it that he helped construct the plaza church. Ramírez's family belonged to a small number of farmers, merchants, and entrepreneurs who stood outside the traditional relationship between the wealthy Mexican rancheros and their workers. His mother was, however, a member of the prominent Ávila family, and Ramírez grew up next door to Jean Louis Vignes, a French vintner who served as a mentor to the young man.

EXTERIOR OF THE PLAZA CHURCH IN LOS ANGELES, PHOTOGRAPH BY EDWARD VISCHER, BEFORE 1875
CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TICOR/PIERCE COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

on the Mexican frontier to an American enclave. He was an intelligent boy who quickly acquired an excellent knowledge of English from American settlers. He also learned French, a skill taught to him by Jean Louis Vignes and his compatriots. Ramírez's mastery of French and English, together with his native Spanish, made him conversant in three languages before he was fourteen years old.

Ramírez was hired by the *Los Angeles Star* as a compositor during 1851. The newspaper first appeared on May 17, 1851, to serve American residents who were a distinct minority in a Mexican population. As a gesture toward its surroundings, the back page of the journal was printed in Spanish under the title *La Estrella de Los Angeles*. Ramírez's fourteenth birthday occurred just three months before the first edition of the *Star*. Despite his youth, he was a natural candidate for employ-

ment by the newspaper. Ramírez was one of the few people in Los Angeles who was at home with the printed word in English and Spanish. He became an expert typesetter and absorbed the details of operating a newspaper.

Ramírez's experience at the *Star* increased his general knowledge since the paper reprinted articles culled from a variety of domestic and foreign publications. For the first time, he had access to information about the world at large. He was also brought into daily contact with such men as Manuel Clemente Rojo, editor of the Spanish section. This sometime lawyer was a politician, and poet of considerable learning. Ramírez developed a friendship with the older man, whose worldliness must have been instructive. In this environment his unusual attainments were appreciated. The August 23,

BELOW: When he was fourteen, Ramírez began to work for the Los Angeles Star as a compositor. Because the young man spoke, read, and wrote English, Spanish, and French, he was a great asset to the newspaper, which published its back page in Spanish.

Ramírez quit his newspaper job when he was fifteen to investigate Santa Clara College, newly formed in San Jose by the Jesuit brotherhood. He enrolled in nearby St. Joseph's College, but perhaps discouraged by the school's lack of sophistication or by Jesuit discipline, he withdrew and worked for a Catholic newspaper in San Francisco.

MISSION SANTA CLARA COLLEGE AND SANTA CLARA COLLEGE.
CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FN 5859

FACING PAGE: Traditional Mexican society of Los Angeles was not generally amenable to the views espoused by Ramírez. Wealthy landowners such as the del Valle family, shown here, were cultivated by American political leaders who, in Los Angeles, tended to be pro-slavery Democrats. Landowners delivered the votes of their employees, friends, and relatives, and their support kept the Democrats in power.

THE DEL VALLE FAMILY AT RANCHO CAMULOS, CA. 1888,
PHOTOGRAPH BY H. G. SCHUMACHER
CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FN 30503



1851, *La Estrella de Los Angeles* reprinted an article from a French newspaper and credited Ramírez for translating it to Spanish.

While working for the *Star*, Ramírez learned that the Catholic Church had opened Santa Clara College near San Jose. About a dozen students began instruction by the Jesuit faculty in May 1851, thus beginning one of California's first schools after statehood. Ramírez quit his newspaper job during 1852 to investigate the new college. He went north accompanied by his ten-year-old sister Isabel. She enrolled at Notre Dame College, a girl's school in San Jose founded by Belgian nuns in 1851. Jean Louis Vignes paid her tuition, according to school records, and also persuaded his nephew, Pierre Sainsevain, to act as a local guardian for Isabel and Francisco. Vignes was the godfather of both children and took an unusual interest in their welfare. Sainsevain was a pioneer resident of San Jose, ideally situated to watch over his uncle's godchildren. Since Vignes paid Isabel's tuition, it is likely that he assumed Ramírez's expenses as well.⁷

Ramírez decided not to attend Santa Clara College but went to classes in a small adobe structure adjacent to St. Joseph's Church in San Jose. The Jesuits established a school at this location in 1850 called St. Joseph's College. During the early 1850s, Father John Nobili operated both the church, with its tiny school, and Santa Clara College. During their formative period, both colleges were housed in rude adobes and were short of money, and understaffed.⁸ Neither was an institution of higher learning in the modern sense. Ramírez may have received some advanced tutoring but could hope for little else. Already trilingual, widely read, and a veteran of newspaper work, he might have been disillusioned by his classes and resistant to Jesuit discipline. For whatever reason, he stayed less than a year.

Ramírez moved to San Francisco and began to work on *The Catholic Standard*, a newspaper first published on May 6, 1853.⁹ It was directed toward Catholic laymen and was affiliated with the Church. Ramírez's passage from a Jesuit college

to a Catholic newspaper seems more than coincidence. Perhaps a sympathetic teacher helped him extend the apprenticeship begun on the *Los Angeles Star*.

When *The Catholic Standard* went bankrupt in early 1854, Ramírez did not return home. Instead, he went to Marysville and worked for *The Weekly California Express*, a newspaper begun in 1852. The town of about 4,500 people stood at the juncture of the Feather and Yuba rivers, with direct communication by steamboat to Sacramento. It was a supply point for the gold fields, a fact that brought Ramírez into contact with American miners. The region had a history of intense hatred toward Mexicans, and Ramírez must have been affected to some extent by this hostility. In later years, American violence toward the Spanish-speaking would be a frequent theme in his newspaper.

Toward the end of 1854, Ramírez left Marysville and returned to Los Angeles. He was seventeen years old, highly skilled in newspaper work, and

far more sophisticated than his age would suggest. These qualities induced James S. Waite, owner of the *Los Angeles Star*, to offer Ramírez the editorship of the paper's Spanish page, *La Estrella de Los Angeles*. Since the departure of Manuel Clemente Rojo in 1853, *La Estrella* had been largely neglected. It contained little more than legal notices, statutes, and abstracts from American periodicals translated into Spanish.

RAMÍREZ FOUNDS *EL CLAMOR PÚBLICO*

Ramírez was not long content as the editor of *La Estrella* and aspired to begin his own newspaper. This ambition was encouraged by James S. Waite and probably financed by Jean Louis Vignes. Ramírez chose to call his newspaper *El Clamor Público*, a name already in use by one of Madrid's great journals.

From the beginning, the success of the newspaper was jeopardized because Ramírez was out of touch with the profoundly conservative Mexican community in Los Angeles. Ramírez embraced





Joseph Lancaster Brent, a Catholic lawyer from Maryland, recruited prominent Californios into the Democratic Party. He won many over with his personal charm, religious beliefs, and ability to speak Spanish. Brent represented a branch of the Democratic party known as the Chivalry, which zealously supported slavery and its extension into territories acquired by the Mexican American War. Ramírez's anti-slavery views brought him into frequent conflict with Brent and his followers.

COURTESY OF THE LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

the principles of nineteenth-century liberalism and probably read the work of such Mexicans as José María Luis Mora and other ideologues of the liberal movement headed by Benito Juárez. One scholar suspects that Ramírez "traveled in Mexican revolutionary circles."¹⁰ Another believes that while in Mexico, he was "exposed to revolutionary ideology."¹¹ Such opinions are conjectural, since there is no evidence of early visits to Mexico by Ramírez. However, they illustrate the radical nature of the political and social content of his newspaper.

Several recurrent themes appeared in the pages of *El Clamor Público* drawn directly from Mexican liberalism. Among them was a fervent belief in racial equality and the abolition of slavery. Others included the impartial administration of justice and full political rights for every citizen. The last two ideals were incorporated in the U.S. Constitution, a document greatly admired by Ramírez, though he believed its value was largely nullified by American racism and slavery.

Traditional Mexican society of Los Angeles was not amenable to the views espoused by Ramírez; most of its members did not share his liberalism. They were joined by Americans arriving from

elsewhere in the United States, many of whom supported slavery and regarded abolitionists as part of a lunatic fringe. The most damaging opposition to *El Clamor Público* came from wealthy Spanish-speaking landowners who made up only about 3 percent of California Mexicans.¹² This influential group resided in adobe townhouses adjacent to the plaza in Los Angeles when not visiting their outlying ranches. Sometimes known as the "ranchero elite," they controlled the economic, political, and social life of Mexican Los Angeles.

The earliest American political leaders cultivated an alliance with the ranchero elite. One of them, lawyer Joseph Lancaster Brent, learned Spanish and set about recruiting prominent rancheros into the Democratic Party. A Catholic from Maryland, Brent captivated many wealthy Mexican families by his personal charm, religious beliefs, and ability to speak their language. He represented a branch of the Democratic Party originating in the Deep South known as the Chivalry, which zealously supported slavery and its extension into the territories acquired by the Mexican American War. Many of the ranchero elite found the Chivalry appealing. There was a certain analogy between their position as owners of vast

estates supported by Indian labor and the aristocratic plantations of the South worked by slaves. By 1853, Brent had solidified a tremendous influence over wealthy Mexicans.¹³ The landowners delivered the votes of their employees, friends, and relatives, and their support was key to keeping the Southern Chivalry in power.

Neither a member of the *ranchero* elite or the working classes, Ramírez's family belonged to a small number of agriculturists, merchants, and entrepreneurs who stood outside the traditional relationship between *rancheros* and their workers. As a liberal, he aligned himself with the laboring class, hoping to raise their political awareness and induce them to vote for candidates who would reduce discrimination and improve the condition of Spanish-speaking people.

Ramírez encountered difficulties in recruiting Mexican subscribers. In the first edition of *El Clamor Público*, published on June 19, 1855, he wrote a column in which he regretted that "foreigners"—meaning the Americans and French—had shown more interest in subscribing than Mexicans. He made the first of many appeals for support from the Spanish-speaking community. His newspaper was "entirely dedicated" to their interests, and would be the "best defense" of the Mexican people. Ramírez condemned those who took no part in matters of public interest. He challenged his countrymen to work together to see what "happy results" they could produce by their efforts.

The first manifestation of Ramírez's radical views was an editorial he published July 24, 1855:

The idea of liberty in the United States is truly curious. . . . Certain people have no liberty at all. It is denied by the courts to every person of color. . . . But there is the great liberty of any white man to buy a human being in order to arbitrarily hang him or burn him alive. This happens in states where slavery is tolerated and the vilest despotism runs wild—this, in the center of the nation that calls itself a "model republic."

This sarcastic criticism of the "peculiar institution" was certain to anger white Southerners of the Chivalry who controlled Los Angeles. It also offended their affluent Mexican allies.

American disapproval of *El Clamor Público* may have been somewhat mollified by occasional articles expressing admiration for the United States and its people. Ramírez well knew that Mexican liberalism and American democracy arose from common European origins. His writing reflected a profound understanding of American history. The July 3, 1855, edition, for example, printed a translation of the Declaration of Independence and remarkably detailed biographies of the men who inspired it. Ramírez wrote a laudatory column on August 28, 1855, saying that the U.S. government was "formed by men of such greatness and wisdom that they have no parallel in history."

In a strange juxtaposition of items in the May 24, 1856, edition, however, an article praising the United States appeared next to one reporting an American massacre of Chileans and Mexicans in the gold country. Whether by coincidence or not, this issue marked the end of editorials expressing an exalted opinion of the United States.

"CALIFORNIANS! AMERICANS! CITIZENS OF EVERY ORIGIN AND CLASS!"

Throughout the brief existence of *El Clamor Público*, Ramírez proposed conflicting ideas on ways to combat American racism. One tactic was his attempt to convince Americans that they ought to accept Mexicans on terms of equality. He apparently thought this might be done by presenting Americans with a law-abiding Mexican population willing to unite with them. A July 19, 1856, editorial urged:

Californians! Americans! Citizens of every origin and class! Let us all unite to see that the laws are obeyed and that our officials are aided in carrying them out when necessary. By doing this we will soon see the regeneration of our country and peacefully enjoy our rights to life and property.

At other times, Ramírez urged the Mexican majority to vote as a bloc and take power away from the Americans. Mexicans could outvote Americans at least until 1862. As he wrote on October 4, 1856, "We have enough votes among ourselves to control the elections in this county and we have the power to elect candidates who will work for our interest." Reacting to unfair treatment by American politicians on May 9, 1857, Ramírez urged that they be replaced by Mexican officeholders, saying, "equality of the Spanish-speaking depends on the will of the people manifested in the electoral urn." Sadly, his attempts to effect change by voting were ignored. The tendency of Mexican voters to support racist Chivalry politicians at the request of the *ranchero* elite plagued Ramírez throughout his career in Los Angeles. In one of the last issues of *El Clamor Público*, December 24, 1859, he complained: "It is unbelievable that after so many insults and affronts, one still sees the sad spectacle in California of Hispanic Americans supporting the Slavery Party with their votes and influence."

The most radical solution to Mexicans' lack of empowerment urged by Ramírez was a complete withdrawal from California. Several leading Mexicans, including ex-Governor Juan Alvarado, met in early February of 1855, at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco to form the Society for the Promotion of the Emigration of Native Californians to Sonora. They appointed Jesus Islas to recruit Mexicans for a movement to leave the state.¹⁴ Islas obtained permission from the state of Sonora to populate the abandoned village of Sáric, thirty miles south of Nogales and the Arizona border, which had been abandoned years before due to Apache incursions.

Ramírez supported the movement to Sáric. As Islas approached Los Angeles with a caravan of emigrants, Ramírez tried to rally local residents to go south. He wrote on May 10, 1856, that "in California there is no justice, no equality, no liberty. We ask in the name of reason and common sense if it would not be better for us to emigrate to the only asylum that guarantees our liberty."

Few in Los Angeles responded favorably. Sonora was known to be a dangerous place filled with hostile Indians, bandits, and bloody political revolts.

Nevertheless, the village of Sáric was reestablished by a colony of some two hundred California Mexicans. As late as 1883, a report to the governor of Sonora referred to the California settlers by stating that many of Sáric's eight hundred inhabitants "retained the characteristics of colonists."¹⁵ Ramírez did not join the movement to Sáric, but in 1859 he again promoted an attempt to leave California for Mexico. The movement was based in Los Angeles and sponsored by Ramírez's friend, Manuel Retes. Ramírez's paper of October 23, 1859, referred to the project of Retes as "a praiseworthy enterprise."

Ramírez's attempts to foster good relations with Americans sometimes met with frustration. Ironically, a conciliatory editorial of July 19, 1856, appeared on the very day an innocent Mexican named Antonio Ruiz was senselessly shot to death by an American deputy marshal named William W. Jenkins. When American authorities refused to punish Jenkins, a furious party of the village Mexican population attacked the plaza in an unsuccessful attempt to lynch him. Partly to placate the Spanish-speaking majority, Jenkins was subjected to a jury trial for manslaughter. An all-American jury acquitted him in fifteen minutes.¹⁶

At first, Ramírez reacted calmly to this racial affront. Later, in connection with the Jenkins affair and other frustrations brought on by Americans, Ramírez's outrage burst forth, as in his editorial on August 2, 1856:

Almost all the newspapers from the north are continually filled with reports of lynchings in the mines. And, oh fatality! only Mexicans are the victims of the people's insane fury! Mexicans alone have been sacrificed on gallows raised to launch their poor souls into eternity. Is this the *liberty* and *equality* of the country we have adopted?

Two weeks later, Ramírez returned to a calmer perspective. In the August 16 issue, he wrote, "It is necessary that there be *union* in this city to have security. Let us all work together in the same spirit to carry out the laws."

SUPPORTING THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

Despite Ramírez's resentment toward Americans for their refusal to accept Mexicans as equals, he found the new Republican Party worthy of support. He was surprised to learn of a well-organized American movement that opposed slavery. Republican presidential candidate John C. Frémont seemed ideal to Ramírez. Frémont had treated California Mexicans respectfully while he was military governor in Los Angeles during 1847.

Ramírez used *El Clamor Público* to campaign for Frémont. He was gratified that Frémont was against slavery and favored equality for Mexicans. Enemies of Frémont ridiculed him for these views by posting signs in San Francisco reading, "Frémont: Free Niggers and Frijoles."¹⁷ Ramírez's enthusiastic support for Frémont transformed *El Clamor Público* into an organ of the Republican Party in southern California. The *Los Angeles Star*, voice of the Chivalry Democrats, accused Ramírez of being a paid propagandist for the Republicans, something he did not bother to deny.

In 1857 Ramírez was again challenged by American behavior toward Mexicans. On January 23, a group of Mexican outlaws ambushed a posse led by Sheriff James R. Barton near San Juan Capistrano. According to Harris Newmark, when word of Barton's fate reached Los Angeles, "the frenzy was indescribable."¹⁸ Although the guilty parties were captured and hanged, Americans formed vigilante groups that lynched several innocent Mexicans erroneously believed to be involved in Barton's murder. In various editions of *El Clamor Público* thereafter, Ramírez published a series of brilliant editorials denouncing the American vigilante lynchings. As Mexican outrage over the lynchings mounted, it appeared for a time that Los Angeles was on the brink of a race war.



When Ramírez learned there was a well-organized anti-slavery movement in the United States, he backed it enthusiastically. John C. Frémont had earned the respect of Californios in Los Angeles when he was military governor in 1847, and Ramírez—for whom the Republican slogan of "Free speech, free press, free soil, free men, Frémont and victory!" likely resonated—campaigns on behalf of Frémont's run for president in 1856. The *Los Angeles Star*, voice of the Chivalry Democrats, accused Ramírez of being a paid propagandist for the Republicans, something the publisher did not deny.

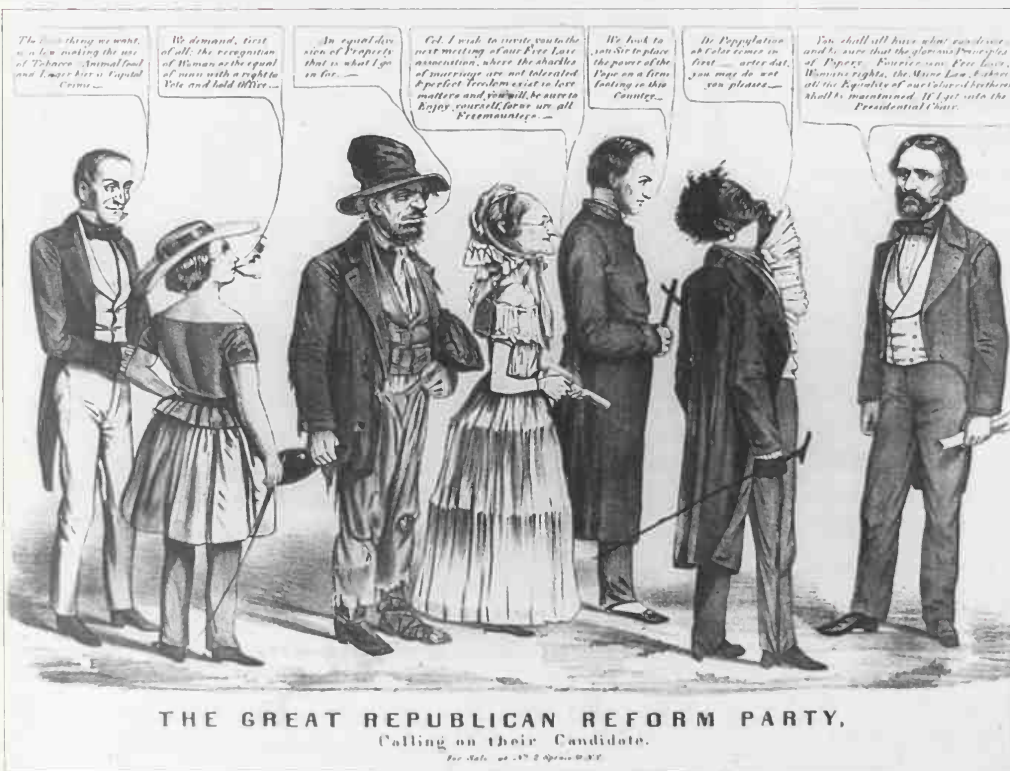
COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY,
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

When Ramírez turned twenty-one in 1858, he announced his candidacy for the state assembly. After Frémont's defeat, Ramírez's devotion to the Republican Party was temporarily abated, causing him to run as an independent candidate. His best hope for election was to gather support from a coalition of white Republicans, Mexicans, and members of the French community. The Mexican element was the largest group in Los Angeles, but their voting habits were problematic. Some sold their votes to the Chivalry at the request of their employers among the *ranchero* elite. The usual price was about a dollar. Ramírez lashed out at this practice in several editorials such as one August 28, 1858, in which he wrote: "There are no words strong enough to condemn a man who sells his vote and vilely prostitutes his conscience and personal rights."

As might be expected, the Chivalry opposition easily defeated Ramírez. Nevertheless, as he wrote in the paper on September 4, 1858, he pledged to continue working against the Chivalry and "all their undertakings which lead to the ruin, misery and destruction of native Californians."

INSULTING THE READERS AND THE END OF EL CLAMOR

The year 1858 closed with an unfortunate incident for Ramírez and the future of his newspaper. He was severely affected by another lynching of a Mexican on November 30, and the apathetic response of Spanish-speaking residents. Their inertia and failure to elect officials willing to protect Mexicans from American violence triggered a vituperative attack on his own people:



Enemies of Frémont and the Republican Party characterized the campaign as "Frémont: Free Niggers and Frijoles." Currier & Ives portrayed Frémont as the champion of a motley array of radicals and reformers. As he stands patiently at far right he is called upon by (left to right): a temperance advocate; a cigar-smoking, trousered suffragette; a ragged socialist holding a liquor bottle; a spinsterish libertarian; a Catholic priest holding a cross; and a free Black dandy.

COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS,
PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

And you, imbecile Californians! You are responsible for the lamentable acts we are witnessing. We are tired of saying: "Open your eyes, now is the time to assert your rights and interests." It is shameful, but necessary to admit that you are the sarcasm of humanity. When the time comes to vote, the first of your rights, you go about the streets in the carriages of candidates, and you will not cast your votes unless you are paid for them. . . You are cowardly and stupid, inspiring nothing but disdain.

This insult drastically reduced his credibility among his readers and accelerated the demise of *El Clamor Público*.

Near the end of 1859, the failure of *El Clamor Público* was imminent. Ramírez could no longer afford to operate with few advertisers and a declining readership. On December 17, 1859, he announced that his newspaper was for sale. Charles R. Conway and Alonso Waite purchased the paper and formed a partnership to operate another newspaper, the *Semi-Weekly News*.

The final issue of *El Clamor Público* appeared December 31, 1859, with a sullen editorial farewell by Ramírez. A week before, he printed an announcement that he had accepted an offer from the governor of Sonora, Mexico, Ignacio Pesqueira, to serve as editor of the state's official newspaper, *La Estrella de Occidente*. Ramírez left Los Angeles in March 1860 in one of the caravans that regularly moved between Sonora and California. When he arrived in Ures, the capital of Sonora, he was assigned living quarters in the Casa de Correcciones, a state building next to the state printing office. His position as state printer and editor of the official newspaper was considered important in the local government hierarchy. Yet Sonora was nearly bankrupt, and public employees seldom received their full salaries.¹⁹

SONORA'S STAR OF THE WEST

Political and social conditions in Sonora were chaotic. Apart from the dangers of hostile Indians

and outlaw bands, violent political uprisings were common. Ramírez discovered this on September 30, 1860, when a group of insurgents attacked the Casa de Correcciones as part of an effort to overthrow Governor Pesqueira. During a two-hour firefight, seven rebels were killed in front of the building where Ramírez lived and worked. He published his reaction to the experience in *La Estrella de Occidente* on October 12: "We dare not describe in detail the fear and anguish of the town's population or the horrible consequences that faced them if the perverted beings who made up the attackers had triumphed."

With his position increasingly precarious, Ramírez announced his departure in the February 14, 1862 edition of the newspaper. His experience had been traumatic. Besides being exposed to dangerous conflicts, he was seldom paid. He found Sonora to be an impoverished and brutally violent place. Travel outside Ures was only possible with an armed escort. It was not the idyllic refuge he imagined when he advocated a withdrawal to Sonora by California Mexicans in the pages of *El Clamor Público*.

Ramírez returned home by steamer from Guaymas during March 1862. The Civil War was well under way and his old political enemies, the Chivalry Democrats, had made Los Angeles an island of Confederate sympathy. The few Union men in the city feared that local secessionists might attempt to seize southern California. The government warily responded by posting soldiers in the streets to keep an eye on the Southern activists.²⁰ Although Ramírez had followed the Los Angeles press while in Sonora, he was probably not prepared for the degree of tension between Americans caused by the Civil War.

CIVIL WAR LOYALTIES

One of Ramírez's first acts upon his return to Los Angeles was to apply for a notary public commission. Only eight such positions were allocated to Los Angeles County. He was immediately appointed a notary public by the first Repub-

lican governor, Leland Stanford, a belated reward for past political service.²¹ At that time, the office of notary public was quite lucrative and prestigious. A single notarization brought a fee of one dollar, as much as a common laborer earned for a full day's work.²² Ramírez moved into an office with attorney Joseph R. Gitchell.

In the meantime, Ramírez continued to search for employment through his political contacts. His efforts resulted in an appointment as registrar of the federal land office in Los Angeles, a fact announced in the November 8, 1862, *Los Angeles Star*. This was a genuine Republican sinecure, a position paying five hundred dollars a year but requiring little work. It also provided him with a free office in quarters rented by the U.S. government.²³

About this time, the local Republican Party changed its name to the Union Party to emphasize its loyalty to the federal government in the Civil War. Ramírez took an active role in Union Party affairs, but was also involved with the Mexican community. Mexicans were deeply disturbed by the recent French invasion of Mexico. According to the May 27, 1862, *Los Angeles News*, when word of the Mexican victory at Puebla on May 5 reached Los Angeles, there was great rejoicing among the Spanish speaking. A fiesta was held, the first Cinco de Mayo celebration in Los Angeles, to commemorate the Mexican triumph. Ramírez was chosen as the main speaker at the event. He gave a stirring oration after a procession through the streets led by a band.

Largely inspired by Ramírez, a Mexican civic organization was formed called La Junta Patriótica de Los Angeles. Ramírez wrote the constitution and was its first secretary.²⁴ This was part of a larger movement of juntas patrióticas to provide the government of Benito Juárez with support for his resistance to the French invasion.

By virtue of his work for the Union Party, Ramírez was nominated as a candidate for state senator on August 16, 1863. His campaign was aimed at

both Americans and Mexicans. On August 31, the *Los Angeles News* reported that the previous day, Ramírez addressed a "very large crowd of native Californians" in Spanish and that same night spoke in front of the Lafayette Hotel to a "Grand Rally of Union Citizens" in English.

Ramírez's opponent for state senator was Henry Hamilton, editor of the *Los Angeles Star*. The difference between the men could not be clearer. Hamilton was a spokesman for the Chivalry and a self-proclaimed racist, and the editorials in his newspaper denounced the Union and favored the Confederacy. Los Angeles voters favored his stance, and Hamilton won the election, held on September 2, 1863, garnering 922 votes to 761 for Ramírez.²⁵

In the rest of California, the Union Party won easily. Ramírez believed that the state Senate, mainly Union men, would never admit a Confederate sympathizer like Hamilton to their ranks. Ramírez filed a challenge to Hamilton's election and departed for Sacramento to contest it. But Ramírez misjudged the realities of state politics. The Senate did not regard their newly elected colleague as dangerous. Hamilton was one of five Copperheads in the legislature whose presence was considered more of a nuisance than a threat. The Senate relegated Hamilton to a few minor committees where they believed he could do no harm. The Elections Committee delayed a ruling on Ramírez's contest against Hamilton until the end of the session. To his great disappointment, the committee eventually ruled against Ramírez.²⁶

RAMÍREZ IN SAN FRANCISCO

During his prolonged sojourn in Sacramento, Ramírez made several trips to San Francisco. He observed a large Mexican community near North Beach clustered about the intersection of Powell and Vallejo streets at the foot of Russian Hill. Like their counterparts in Los Angeles, they had earlier formed a junta patriótica to raise support for Benito Juárez. As the junta movement rapidly spread through California, a small cadre of prom-

inent Mexicans formed a guiding organization in San Francisco to coordinate the activities of juntas throughout the state and to receive money for transmission to Mexico. This elite executive body was called the Junta Central. One of its members was Antonio Mancillas, editor of the Spanish-language newspaper, *La Voz de Méjico*. Mancillas offered Ramírez a position assisting him at his newspaper in San Francisco.

San Francisco was an exciting and dynamic place for a person like Ramírez. The French invasion of Mexico had forced many famous politicians and writers into exile. Several of these celebrities found their way to San Francisco, where they held court among local expatriates. One of the first to arrive was Ignacio Ramírez, popularly known as “*El Nigromante*.”²⁷ A liberal politician, lawyer, and university professor, El Nigromante is still regarded as one of Mexico’s greatest writers. He was a confidante of Benito Juárez and the architect of the liberal constitution of 1857. Diego Rivera portrayed his close relationship with Juárez by placing him next to the president in a mural in the National Palace.

Another writer who took refuge in San Francisco was José Maria Vigil. Among other achievements, he was editor of the renowned historical work, *México a través de los siglos* [Mexico through the centuries]. Ramírez became acquainted with Vigil and other intellectuals, poets, and artists who helped create a vibrant Mexican community in San Francisco. After returning to Los Angeles, Ramírez decided to accept the position on *La Voz de Méjico* offered by Antonio Mancillas. He settled his affairs in Los Angeles and returned to San Francisco in October of 1864.

Ramírez, however, found it difficult to work with Mancillas. A mutual dislike developed between the two men, which eventually grew into hatred. Ramírez left *La Voz de Méjico* when he encountered another opportunity with a newspaper called *El Nuevo Mundo*.

General Plácido Vega, one of the most influential figures in the Mexican community, started *El*

SONORA CONNECTIONS

BY RODOLFO F. ACUÑA

Some historians have believed that Francisco P. Ramírez came from Sonora, Mexico. Indeed, I am one of the sources cited for this error. Records show, however, that Ramírez was born in California, as was his father. Nonetheless, the family’s ties to Sonora were strong, and the four pages of the *Clamor* were full of items on the Mexican state.

The tone of the paper changed over its brief four-year run. At first, Ramírez was optimistic about the prospects for Mexicans under the U.S. Constitution. As it became evident that Mexicans were not going to be granted parity with European Americans and atrocities accumulated, Ramírez’s editorials reflected the Mexicanos’ disillusionment with U.S.-style democracy and he became an implacable critic of the treatment of Mexicans.

By October 1856 Ramírez encouraged Mexicans and Chileans to join Jesús Isla’s *Junta Colonizadora de Sonora* and return to Mexico. He promoted this emigration society even when it was evident that it was not getting support from Mexico. When a reader objected to Ramírez’s “return-to-Mexico” campaign, saying: “California has always been the asylum of Sonorans, and the place where they have found good wages, hospitality, and happiness,” Ramírez caustically responded that the letter did not merit comment and asked: “Are the Californios as happy today as when they belonged to the Republic of Mexico, in spite of all of its revolutions and changes in government?”

Nuevo Mundo in June 1864. Vega, the governor of Sinaloa, had been sent to San Francisco by Benito Juárez to raise money and troops to support Mexico's struggle against the French. He was also directed to create favorable public opinion for the regime of Juárez in the United States. As part of his public relations mission, Vega opened *El Nuevo Mundo* and installed José Maria Vigil as its editor.²⁸

The newspaper was soon in financial trouble. Vigil returned to Mexico after only two months as editor, and Vega was unwilling to put more money into the enterprise. Ramírez volunteered to accept responsibility for the newspaper's debts in exchange for becoming its proprietor. This was agreed to, and during December 1864, *El Nuevo Mundo* was published by "F. P. Ramírez and Co."²⁹

The first goal of Ramírez was to make *El Nuevo Mundo* an organ of the junta patriótica movement in California. The number of juntas patrióticas increased dramatically after it was known that the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian of Austria had been made the spurious "emperor" of Mexico.

Ramírez saw the junta movement as more than a way to raise money for the Juárez government. He understood it had great political potential because many members were voters in American elections. Ramírez hoped that the juntas would evolve into a permanent voting bloc, with him as its leader—if he could deliver the Mexican vote to the Union Party, he would gain the power and influence he desired.³⁰ Ramírez used *El Nuevo Mundo* to promote his election as general treasurer of the Junta Central, the most powerful office in the junta movement. Ramírez's drive to control the junta movement brought him into conflict with General Vega, who, as an official representative of the Mexican government, felt he was entitled to appoint the general treasurer without an election. Ramírez responded with editorials in *El Nuevo Mundo* insulting Vega and denying his authority over the juntas.³¹

The personal animosity between Ramírez and Vega culminated in a physical altercation on March 26, 1865, after a meeting of the Junta Central. Vega approached Ramírez on the sidewalk outside Dashaway Hall on Post Street and violently threw him to the ground. The grappling men were finally separated by the police, who arrested them.³²

The question of who would be general treasurer of the Junta Central was never settled. Ramírez's newspaper constantly published letters of support from Juntas Patrióticas all over California demanding that he take charge. Much of the correspondence contained donations which Ramírez sent to Mexico, making him the de facto general treasurer.³³

After the French withdrawal from Mexico and Maximilian's execution, the junta movement declined. In 1868 Ramírez sold *El Nuevo Mundo* to a Chilean named Felipe Fierro and returned to Los Angeles.

RETURN TO LOS ANGELES AND REPUBLICAN POLITICS

In Los Angeles Ramírez began to study law on his own. During March 1869, he filed a petition with Judge Murray Morrison for admission to the local bar. A committee of three lawyers, Charles Hathaway Larrabee, Andrew J. King, and William McPherson, were appointed to examine Ramírez's qualifications.³⁴ Based on their recommendation, Ramírez was licensed as a lawyer. Larrabee was sufficiently impressed with Ramírez to hire him. A former justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, Larrabee was eminently qualified to provide Ramírez a legal apprenticeship.

Ramírez worked as an assistant to Larrabee. They filed several lawsuits in 1869 on behalf of Mexican landowners, most of slight consequence. One involved an injunction to prevent a tenant farmer from harvesting a crop until he paid his landlord three hundred dollars in back rent, another was a demand for \$786 by a Mexican rancher against an American who drove away a few

head of cattle. Such suits were generally settled out of court, with Larrabee using Ramírez exclusively for Mexican clients.³⁵

Ramírez eventually developed his own law practice based mainly on Mexican and French clients, and his drive for political advancement began to assert itself. The Union Party had once again become the Republican Party, and Ramírez attended most of its functions and stumped for its candidates. Ramírez's political activities were rewarded in his being named to the local Republican Central Committee, a significant appointment reported by the June 12, 1871, *Los Angeles Evening Express*. During this period, he was also involved in a political insurgency led by Max Strobel, a former mayor of Anaheim. Strobel organized the People's Convention in Anaheim on June 25, 1871, which nominated a slate of candidates, the People's Ticket, regardless of political affiliation.

Ramírez did not attend Strobel's convention but found that it had nominated him as a candidate for the state assembly. The platform of the People's Convention would have appealed to him. It was radical in nature, advocating a break up of the "Democratic ring" of Southerners who controlled Los Angeles. After experiencing considerable opposition from both the regular Democratic and Republican parties, Strobel's organization dissolved before the fall election took place. Nevertheless, Ramírez's name appeared for several weeks in paid political advertisements for the People's Ticket.³⁶

Most of Ramírez's efforts were on behalf of the Republican candidate for governor, Newton Booth, and Romualdo Pacheco, the party's choice for lieutenant governor. He spent significant time in Sonoratown, the Mexican quarter just north of the Plaza, and was the most effective campaigner the Republicans had among Mexicans. The August 11, 1871, *Evening Express* noted that Ramírez had been elected president of the Spanish-American Republican Club.



*As an outspoken member of the fourth estate, Francisco Ramírez made enemies. One antagonist was General Plácido Vega, an official representative of the Mexican government in San Francisco. After *El Clamor Público* ceased publication in 1859, Ramírez returned to San Francisco following an unhappy stint as editor of a newspaper in Sonora and defeat as a candidate for city office in Los Angeles during the Civil War. Ramírez insulted Vega in his newspaper *El Nuevo Mundo*, and the general responded by assaulting the newspaperman on Post Street. Both men were arrested, and Ramírez returned to Los Angeles.*

COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY,
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The final Republican rally in support of Booth and Pacheco was on the evening of September 3, 1871, in front of the Lafayette Hotel. Ramírez was announced as a principal speaker. The September 4 *Evening Express* described his speech as "a very able argument to the Spanish-Americans present in their own language." Ramírez evoked past offenses of the Democratic Party against Mexicans such as the Chivalry's tacit support of Maximilian's empire. He accused them of racism in terms that could have been taken from *El Clamor Público*: "The Democrats ridicule Pacheco, pass laws in which they call the Spanish people 'greasers,' then ask for their votes at elections." Ramírez further contributed to the mass meeting by providing the Spanish-American Republican Club for a march through the streets.



ABOVE LEFT: In Los Angeles Ramírez studied law and was admitted to the local bar in 1869. He stumped for local and state Republicans, including the gubernatorial candidate Newton Booth, and Romualdo Pacheco (left), the party's choice for lieutenant governor in 1870. Booth and Pacheco lost the vote in Los Angeles, but won the overall election. Booth served from 1871 to 1875, and Pacheco became governor for nine months in 1875.

COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY,
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY



BELOW LEFT: In 1878 Ramírez, who had long hungered to serve in public office, ran as the Republican candidate for state assembly. The Democrat who opposed him was Reginaldo del Valle, a young attorney admitted to the bar and the first Mexican to follow in Ramírez's footsteps as a lawyer in Los Angeles. Del Valle had been mentored by Joseph Lancaster Brent and had strong ties to the Chivalry Democrats. He narrowly defeated Ramírez.

COURTESY OF THE LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

The election conformed to the usual pattern of Los Angeles politics. The Democrats, controlled by Southern conservatives, rolled over the Republicans by a vote of nearly two to one. Although Republican Newton Booth, won the gubernatorial election against Democratic incumbent Henry H. Haight, he lost in Los Angeles by 2,177 to 1,421. Despite the efforts of Ramírez and others, the Mexican vote came down on the side of the Democrats.³⁷

At the close of 1871, Ramírez met Frederick A. Stanford, a New York lawyer who had arrived in Los Angeles with his wife and children after passing through Texas. Ramírez quickly formed a friendship with Stanford and the two men decid-

ed to become partners. *The Los Angeles Star* on March 28, 1872, advertised the firm of Stanford and Ramírez at Room 6 in the Temple Block, the largest building in the city.

Having Stanford as a partner must have helped Ramírez. In one of their first cases, *Verdugo v. Urias*, the two men took turns arguing before the jury.³⁸ In this way, Stanford gave Ramírez a practical lesson on how to conduct a trial before a jury—although Ramírez had already been an attorney for more than three years, he had little trial experience. Under Stanford's tutelage, the number of Ramírez's trials began to increase.

In April 1872, Ramírez's friend, Eduardo Teodoli, approached him to ask if he act as editor of a

Spanish-language newspaper Teodoli intended to start called *La Crónica*. Teodoli, an Italian born in Rome, could not do it himself because his Spanish was deficient. After consulting with Stanford, it was agreed that Ramírez would act as editor only for a few months so as not to put his law partnership at risk.

The first office of *La Crónica* was purposely placed in Room 16 of the Temple Block, almost adjacent to that of Stanford and Ramírez. In that way, Ramírez would not waste time running between his editorial office and his law practice. The first edition appeared May 4, 1872. Ramírez may have enjoyed his brief return to journalism, but he soon went back to his law practice. The July 27, 1872 edition of *La Crónica* noted his departure with expressions of gratitude. *La Crónica* endured for several decades and deserves to be studied for the thriving Mexican community in the heart of Los Angeles revealed in its pages.

During 1873 Ramírez was attracted to a political phenomenon much like the People's Ticket of 1871 that revived Max Strobel's goals to hold non-partisan elections to clean up the "ring" in Los Angeles were revived. The *Los Angeles Star* announced a "People's Convention" on July 26, 1873. A "Popular Reform Party" emerged from the event. This time the notion of ridding the city of corrupt party bosses, mainly Southerners, was embraced by the public. The "Monster Meeting of the People's Reform Party" was reported by the September 3, 1873, *Los Angeles Star*, with Ramírez as the principal speaker at the rally. He was, for once, on the victorious side, and the newly formed party swept the elections in September. Its candidates filled nearly all available municipal and county offices.³⁹

Ramírez had enthusiastically supported the People's Reform Party and was a leading speaker on its behalf, but neither Ramírez nor Stanford abandoned the Republicans. Stanford stood in for Ramírez as vice president of the Grand Republican Rally reported by the *Los Angeles Star* August 26,

1875, because Ramírez was too ill to attend. According to the August 28, 1875, issue of *La Crónica*, Ramírez was "prostrate with sickness." He was sufficiently recovered by September 15, 1875, to speak at the Mexican Independence Day celebration. He brought Stanford with him to the podium and although Stanford spoke only halting Spanish, his presence with Ramírez was a publicity coup for their firm.⁴⁰

The partnership of Stanford and Ramírez was badly affected by the illness of Stanford's wife during the last half of 1876. Stanford was distracted by his wife's suffering, which finally ended with her death on December 16, 1876.⁴¹ Despite his grief, Stanford attempted to continue his partnership with Ramírez during 1877, and they appeared together in a series of Republican political rallies as reported in the August 16, 1877, *Los Angeles Star*. They had both become well-known figures in the local Republican Party. Stanford again accompanied Ramírez to the 1877 Mexican Independence Day celebration where Ramírez delivered a long speech and Stanford made a few remarks to the crowd.⁴²

In early 1878, Stanford left Los Angeles for Arizona, leaving Ramírez to run their law practice alone. Ramírez remained active in Republican politics. He was a true loyalist to the party, a fact he pointed out to the Republican County Convention in 1880, when his desire for elected office was renewed. The party nominated him by acclamation as its candidate to the state assembly.⁴³

The Democrat opposing Ramírez was Reginaldo del Valle, a young attorney just admitted to the bar and the first Mexican to follow in Ramírez's footsteps as a lawyer in Los Angeles. Despite his youth, del Valle adhered to the old Democratic Party regime in Los Angeles, which was still heavily influenced by Southerners who echoed Chivalry sentiments. His father, Ignacio del Valle, was one of the *ranchero* elite who had embraced the Chivalry, and Joseph Lancaster Brent, the Chivalry leader who first brought wealthy Mexicans into the Democratic fold during the 1850s, was the younger del Valle's godfather. In the election

of September 1880, del Valle barely beat Ramírez.⁴⁴ This loss, however, was only a minor defeat for Ramírez compared to the disaster about to come his way.

RAMÍREZ'S DOWNFALL

On December 1, 1880, Los Angeles residents heard rumors that Ramírez had been arrested on charges of bank fraud. The next day every newspaper in the city confirmed the scandalous affair. Details emerged in the press during the next few weeks outlining the nature of the charges against Ramírez.

An itinerant Mexican, Jesús Hidales, appeared at Ramírez's office in the Temple Block on November 29, 1880. He told Ramírez he had a \$2,100 certificate of deposit in his name drawn on a San Francisco bank. A later examination of the certificate would show that it was forged and that Hidales had traced his own name over that of the actual owner. Hidales explained to Ramírez that he could not cash it in Los Angeles because he was unable to prove his identity as the certificate's rightful owner.

Prosecutors charged that Ramírez told Hidales that he would vouch for his identity even though he did not know him. In exchange, Ramírez wanted Hidales to give him five hundred dollars from the proceeds of the cashed certificate.⁴⁵

That night, Hidales went to Sonoratown and got drunk, but unbeknownst to him, one of his drinking companions was an informant for Sheriff Billy Rowland. Hidales took a liking to the informant and suggested that they travel to Mexico together. The informant feigned interest, but said he had no money. Hidales said he would soon have plenty of money and displayed the certificate and explained that the next day he would go to the bank at noon to cash it. He was certain to do so because the lawyer Francisco P. Ramírez had agreed to vouch for him at the bank even though he did not know him and was charging five hundred dollars to help defraud the bank.⁴⁶

The next day at noon, Sheriff Rowland went to the bank to investigate. He discovered that Hidales had been there with Ramírez, but had just left. A few minutes later Rowland found Hidales at a livery stable buying a horse and recovered all the money except five hundred dollars, which Hidales said he had given to Ramírez.⁴⁷

Hidales was arrested at once, but Ramírez was not yet accused of a crime. The next day Ramírez went to the jail to speak with Hidales. Two Spanish-speaking deputies hid behind the door of an interview room to eavesdrop on their conversation. According to the deputies, Ramírez made several statements strongly suggesting his complicity with Hidales. That afternoon Ramírez was arrested and released on one thousand dollars bail. A week later, Ramírez hired Henry T. Gage, who would later become governor of California, as his attorney. Within a few days, Gage filed a motion for dismissal, but the motion had no exculpatory evidence and was denied.

A jury trial was set for March 22, 1881, but Ramírez did not appear. He had jumped bail and took a steamer for Mexico, and the March 27, 1881, Los Angeles *Herald* reported that Ramírez was believed to be in Mazatlán. He became a fugitive from justice and never returned to California.

In late 1881, Ramírez appeared in Real del Castillo, the capital of northern Baja California, and a boomtown of 2,500 people that had sprung up after a gold strike. Located about sixty miles northeast of modern Ensenada, it no longer exists except for traces of a few building foundations. Ramírez supported himself by teaching in an elementary school and working for a small newspaper, *El Fronterizo*. He was, apparently, a popular figure and the local people elected him as a *juez de paz*, or justice of the peace, in 1883.⁴⁸

In Real del Castillo, Ramírez was reunited with his old friend and mentor, Manuel Clemente Rojo, who had moved to Baja California in 1853. When Ramírez arrived, Rojo was the subprefect of the Partido del Norte, a position equivalent to governor of northern Baja California.⁴⁹ In 1883



In 1880 Ramírez was accused of and arrested for bank fraud. When the jury trial was convened, Ramírez did not appear—he had jumped bail and fled to Mexico. He never returned to California but eventually settled in Ensenada. Now in his fifties, he married for the first time and began to raise a family of seven children. He practiced law and invested in real estate, becoming wealthy—and is today regarded as one of the founding fathers of Ensenada.

ENSENADA, LOOKING SOUTH, TAKEN JUNE 1887

COURTESY OF THE SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA PIONEERS



Francisco P. Ramírez in 1901 at the age of sixty-four.

COURTESY OF ACERVO HISTORICO DIPLOMATICO,
SECRETARIA DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES, MEXICO, DF.

Rojo moved the capital to Ensenada, and an American company given a concession to exploit the resources of Baja California made its headquarters there. Streets were laid out on an American plan, and communications were established with San Diego by telegraph and a weekly steamship. Ensenada was soon a fair-sized city based on American investments and land sales.

A NEW CAREER IN ENSENADA

Ramírez moved to Ensenada in 1884. He opened a law office and attracted several affluent American clients interested in mining investments. He

soon bought a large two-story house at the northeast corner of Calle Primera and Avenida Ruiz, which, until its demolition in 1983, was a local landmark. On September 2, 1895, Ramírez married a local woman named María Saint Raymond, a twenty-eight year old widow with two children. Ramírez was fifty-eight years old. Despite the wide difference in their ages, seven children were born during their marriage.⁵⁰

While conducting his law practice, Ramírez invested in real estate and acquired a substantial fortune.⁵¹ He could not cross the border for fear of arrest, but, ironically, he represented several American fugitives in Ensenada resisting extradition.⁵² Today, Ramírez is regarded in Ensenada as one of the city's founders and has been the subject of interest by Mexican historians.⁵³ One of his grandsons, Jesús Lorenzo Ramírez, is a commercial fisherman who still resides in the city with his family. He is the child of Ramírez's youngest son, Lorenzo, who never knew his father. Ramírez died on December 28, 1908, at the age of seventy-one from chronic bronchitis before Lorenzo was born.⁵⁴ For many years, Lorenzo operated the family homestead as the Hotel Ramírez. His son, Jesus Lorenzo, was born in the 1950s, late in his father's life. The rest of the family, Lorenzo's siblings and their offspring, have died or disappeared in the United States.⁵⁵

Ramírez's passing went unnoticed in Los Angeles. His widow and children took refuge for a long time in Los Angeles, and later, San Diego. Lorenzo was the only child who returned to Ensenada. Ramírez left no will, an omission that caused his wife to lose much of their wealth in confused legal proceedings with relatives, squatters, and corrupt officials. She died in Ensenada in 1945, an eighty year-old living in modest circumstances.⁵⁶ Both Ramírez and his wife are buried somewhere in the Ensenada Municipal Cemetery in unmarked graves.

REPUBLICS AND MONARCHIES

This essay from March 8, 1856, complements many others published in El Clamor Público that defend the republic as superior to monarchies and other forms of tyranny. The complexity of these concepts is reflected in the refined prose and rhetorical imagery that permeate this piece.

—Armando Miguélez

We all share the desire for everyone to be free and subject to only that which is fair and just and not that which is based on violence. We wish to be ruled by reason, not whim, and we hope that the next generation willingly accepts our legacy rather than actively rejecting it. May we be governed by principle, not greed, and be comrades in our republics rather than slaves. We wish to be full members of society, not just props; human beings rather than simple shadows. May the rich not hamper the poor seeking to become rich, nor the poor become rich by stealing from the powerful. May the nobleman respect the common man, and may the common man accept the nobleman. May all governments take on the responsibility of promoting prosperity among the poor and honor among the virtuous, not the opposite. Clearly, no one person should be of more value

than any other because those who partake of excess destroy equality and those who allow excess conspire with those who seek it. Equality is harmony, and thereon rests peace in the Republic. Disrupting equality through excess is out of tune and what was once sweet music becomes simply noise. Republics should have the same relationship with monarchs as the relationship the land . . . has with the sea. . . . The two are intertwined, but the shoreline provides the land with a way of defending itself against the insolence of the sea, which is constantly threatening it, lapping upon its shores, trying to drown it and drink it up. And the land takes its due on the one hand, and hides on the other. The land, always firm and unmoveable, opposes the rowdiness and perpetual discord of the sea's ever-changing nature. The sea rises up in fury at any gust of wind while the land increases its abundance. The sea is enriched by whatever the land offers her, and the land, with fishing hooks and nets, empties out the sea. And in the same way that safety from the sea is found on land, in its ports, squalls are calmed in Republics and gulfs invade kingdoms. Republics must always act with their brain, not their brawn, but they must have sufficient armies and navies to face any challenge.

(TRANSLATED BY CYNTHIA GIAMBRUNO)

AS REPÚBLICAS Y LAS MONARQUÍAS

Este ensayo se suma a muchos otros publicados en El Clamor Público en defensa de la república como algo superior a las monarquías y otras tiranías. La complejidad de estos conceptos se refleja en la refinada prosa y en las imágenes retóricas que permean esta pieza.

—Armando Miguélez

La pretensión que todos tenemos es la libertad de todos, procurando que nuestra sujeción sea a lo justo, y no a lo violento, que nos mande la razón no albedrío; que seamos de quien nos hereda, no de quien nos arrebató; que seamos cuidado de los principios, no mercancía; y en las repúblicas compañeros, y no esclavos; miembros y no trastos, cuerpos y no sombra. Que el rico no estorbe al pobre que pueda ser rico, ni el pobre se enriquezca con el robo del poderoso. Que el noble no desprecie al plebeyo, que el plebeyo aborrezca al noble; y que todo el gobierno se ocupe en animar a que todos los pobres sean ricos y honrados los virtuosos, y en estorbar que suceda lo contrario. Hase [sic] de obviar que ninguno pueda, ni valga más que todos, porque

quien excede a todos destruye la igualdad, y quien permite que exceda, le manda que conspire. La igualdad es armonía, en que está la paz de la república; pues en turbándola particular exceso, disuena y se oye rumor lo que fue música. Las repúblicas han de tener con los reyes la unión que tiene la tierra . . . con el mar. . . . Siempre están abrazados, mas siempre ésta se defiende de las insolencias de aquél con la orilla; y siempre aquél la amenaza, la va lamiendo, y procurando anegarla y sorbésela; y ésta cobra de sí por una parte tanto como ella esconde por otra. La tierra, siempre firme y sin movimiento, se opone al bullicio y perpetua discordia de su inconstancia. Aquél con cualquiera viento se enfurece; ésta con todos se fecunda; aquél se enriquece con lo que ésta le fía; ésta con anzuelos, redes y lazos de pesca y le despuebla. Y de la manera que toda la seguridad del mar y del abrigo está en la tierra, que da los puertos; así en las repúblicas está el reparo de las borrascas y golfos en los reinos. Éstas siempre han de militar con el seso, pocas veces con las armas: han de tener ejércitos, y armadas prontas en la suficiencia del caudal, que es el que logra las ocasiones. . . .

Linchocracia: Performing “America” in *El Clamor Público*

BY COYA PAZ BROWNRIGG

The title of this essay draws from an 1857 editorial reprinted in *El Clamor Público* that suggests that California was rapidly becoming a lynchocracy.

Edited by Francisco Ramírez, and written almost exclusively in Spanish, *El Clamor Público* championed the rights of Californios and Mexicans (among other Latin American immigrants) in the newly American California. Lynchings were a recurring subject in the newspaper, as Ramírez worked to place the extralegal execution of Latinos in the context of struggles over land rights, limited economic resources, and the United States’s expansionist policies.¹

In the following essay, I suggest that *El Clamor Público* is an invaluable, underutilized resource in the study of lynching in the United States. While lynching has frequently been configured within a black and white paradigm, *El Clamor Público* offers early archival evidence that Mexicans, Californios, Latin Americans, and Native Americans were not only the frequent targets of lynching violence, but that key public figures, such as Francisco Ramírez, understood lynching violence as specifically designed to distinguish between “Americans” (understood as white or Anglo) and racial Others. This evidence counters the assertion frequently made in contemporary lynching scholarship that lynching in the West should be distinguished from the kind of racialized spectacle the term “lynching” conjures today. Further, I argue that both the embodied act of lynching and Ramírez’s use of lynching as a rhetorical strategy

in his newspaper must be understood as public performances staged to transmit particular cultural messages to a variety of audiences. The spectacular act of lynching served then, as it does now, as a complicated site from which to perform identity, place, and citizenship.

At its core, *to perform* means *to do*, *to carry out*. Diana Taylor, professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature at Dartmouth College, notes “performances function as vital acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity.”² To call lynching a performance is to acknowledge it as a public act, framed for an audience, and to ask how the fact of public violence against individual bodies is mobilized as part of larger political and social agendas. Lynchings were meant to be seen. They relied upon an audience, both live and mediated through newspapers, gossip, and letters, to impart important messages about justice, agency, and citizenship. As such, they often followed semi-formal and pre-established structures. Kirk Fuoss, associate professor of performance and communication arts at St. Lawrence University, uses the term “performance complex” to describe the entire web of performance woven in and around lynchings.³ From advance planning and preparation to careful selection of the execution site to communal participation in the act of lynching, many lynchings served as framed events that invited community members to perform as both willing and unwilling participants.

In California, many lynching events followed relatively similar patterns. An individual or group accused another individual or group of a crime,



Artist Ken Gonzales-Day began a series of works to conceptualize the unknown history of lynching in the West. "More than simply retracing the forgotten lines of history," Gonzales-Day notes, "the Erased Lynching series directs our gaze to invisibility itself. Gleaned from the archive, regional museums, and eBay; these photographic images of Western lynchings were altered. The bodies of the condemned and the ropes are removed but the lynch mob, if present, remains fully visible, jeering, laughing, or pulling at the air in a deadly pantomime."

Josefa draws attention to the crowd of nearly 3,000 men that lynched Josefa Segovia, accused of murdering a miner in Downieville.

JOSEFA, 1851 (2005), COURTESY OF KEN GONZALES-DAY

spreading the word about the alleged injustice and gathering support for a lynching posse. The suspect, or someone resembling the suspect, would be apprehended (even if already in formal custody) and taken to a public area that afforded ample public view of the event—perhaps a town square or a bridge—where spectators would gather to observe and participate in the proceedings. Often, those conducting the lynching would arrange a trial, asking those assembled to offer evidence for or against the suspect.⁴ Usually, the suspect was granted the opportunity to make a statement about their guilt or lack thereof. Confessing the crime seldom averted execution, but occasionally appeased the mob enough to ensure a slightly less prolonged form of death. The suspect would then be killed, usually by rope or bullet, and left on display as a warning to others who might choose to transgress social order. Eventually, the body would be released to friends, family, or a community member who had agreed to be responsible for its burial.

Some California lynchings were mass public events, such as the well-documented lynching of Josefa Segovia (sometimes called Juanita) in Downieville.⁵ Accused of murdering a well-liked miner, Josefa was hanged from a bridge in front of three thousand men. Other lynchings were smaller events, staged to send messages to a particular family or community. In either case, the "well choreographed spectacle" of lynching served to affirm "the people's" right to establish their own rules of law and order at a time when California was in a period of legal and national transition.⁶ At the same time, lynchings also sent clear messages about who was to be included in "the people" and who had the right to establish law.⁷ The embodied act of lynching must be understood as a performance, as an efficacious cultural event with devastating corporeal consequences.

The very act of calling something a "lynching" is itself performative, calling upon a range of wider cultural and political associations. The definition

of lynching is hotly contested and varies depending on who is using it and why—Ramírez for example uses the terms “hanging,” “execution,” and “lynching” to describe relatively similar events. At times, these terms work to distinguish between public events and private murders or between those events Ramírez deems legitimate or illegitimate. A well-attended or publicized extralegal death might be called a lynching or an execution while an anonymous body left for dead was likely to be called a hanging particularly if the body was deemed an “Indian.”⁸ More often, however, Ramírez deploys terminology to make a political argument, using the term “lynching” to perform a particular critique of American democratic claims. Historian Christopher Waldrep argues that, in general, the use of the term lynching is best understood as rhetoric, implying a “consciousness of argument, an attempt to influence a public.”⁹ He notes the “word ‘lynching’ cannot be defined. That is its most important characteristic: it is a rhetorical dagger ready to be picked up and deployed by a host of actors in a variety of circumstances.”¹⁰

LYNCING AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

For Ramírez and his contemporaries, to call something a lynching was to enter into a longstanding political and cultural debate about community agency and democratic practice. Although the term “lynching” did not enter into widespread usage until the 1830s, Waldrep traces its origins to the American Revolution. He points to the Bedford, Virginia, magistrate and militia leader Charles Lynch, who regularly “ran down and hanged miscreants outside the law.”¹¹ Governor Thomas Jefferson praised the militia for taking measures to “expose [suspected traitors] to the pains of law,” but cautioned them to “avoid any irregularity which might give them legal means of withdrawing themselves from punishment.” Nevertheless, he agreed that the “method of seizing them at once,” regardless of proof of guilt, “was best,” as long as they were “regularly tried afterwards.” These exhortations for “regular trials” did not preclude immediate hangings and whippings, as

in the case of Zacharias Gross, who was accused of horse-thievery and executed on the spot, “with the joint consent of near three hundred men.” Lynch was perceived by some as having an ethnic bias, given one wife’s worry that her husband would not be granted a fair trial because of “a misunderstanding between Colo Lynch and the Welsh in General.” The diarist Andrew Ellicott offers a slightly different origin of the term “lynch,” complaining that his neighbor William Lynch had responded to Tory insurrection by organizing “Lynch-men associated for the purpose of punishing crime crimes in a summary way without the tedious and technical forms of our courts of justice.”¹² These early roots of the term “lynching” reveal an important tension in the meaning of lynching. On the one hand, advocates articulated lynching as a necessary mode of exacting justice, particularly during unstable or contentious political environments. On the other hand, some participants recognized the potential for lynching to destabilize the premise of American democracy, as lynching eschewed the court system and the Fifth Amendment in favor of personal bias and group discretion.

This was an active tension in Ramírez’s California. Journalist Philip Dray writes that in the early to mid-nineteenth century, lynching “was understood to exist in lieu of established systems of justice, and observers, even those who advocated the practice, believed that as a feature of frontier life it would be phased out by the advent of civilization—the coming of larger municipalities, courts, and a salaried constabulary.”¹³ In Western territories and states, lynching was a common and tolerated practice that included a full range of corporeal punishment, from public whippings to full-scale executions. By the mid-1800s, “lynching” as a term referred almost exclusively to public deaths, and even as California established formal court and legal systems, it continued to flourish as a regular—and often admired—practice.¹⁴ As the Spanish-language section of the *Los Angeles Star* noted in February 1855: “The law of Lynch, or hanging by the people, reigns supreme



Lynching is a frequent subject in *El Clamor Público*, and Ramírez generally rejected lynching violence. “If every individual American has the authority, just by wishing it, to sentence to death and assassinate our countrymen, we would have equal right to use similar measures—and then who would be responsible for such ill-fated consequences?”

The “Negro Joshua” was accused of killing a miner. He was lynched following a trial by a kangaroo court in 1852.

JOSH, 1852 (2005), COURTESY OF KEN GONZALES-DAY

in California.”¹⁵ Lynching was generally understood to be a community act, one that implied some degree of community sanction regardless of the number of actual participants in the punishment. Supporters of particular lynchings often argued that the legal system failed to protect citizens and that the lengthy process of trying an accused too often resulted in the offender being released on a technicality. Many lamented that the law was not more effective, resulting in the “regrettable” need for lynching. In a July 1856 editorial, the *Los Angeles Star* mused:

It is too true, that great laxity has prevailed in the administration of justice throughout California; the people have never reposed that confidence in the Courts and Judges and officers, which have characterized the public in other States; and hence we find the ready resort to mob law which the history of the country so frequently narrates.¹⁶

Critics of lynching violence considered the practice to be at odds with U.S. democratic values and worried that lynching violence reflected negatively on California. Ramírez was particularly adept at mobilizing this critique and used lynching

violence to challenge U.S. ideologies of democracy and equality. In an August 2, 1856, editorial, for example, he wrote: “almost all of the northern newspapers are filled with news about lynchings in the mines. Oh Fatality! Only Mexicans have been sacrificed on these shameful gallows raised to launch their poor souls into eternity!” He asks, “Is this the *liberty* and *equality* in the country we have adopted?”¹⁷ While Ramírez was not uniformly against lynching, he felt that Mexicans and other Latin Americans were disproportionately the targets of lynching violence. Lynching was the premiere example of how the United States had failed to live up to the promises of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and Ramírez warned that the United States would export its particular brand of biased “lynchocracy” if allowed to continue annexing land in Mexico and beyond.¹⁸ Ramírez was astutely aware of the rhetoric that was used to justify U.S. incursions into Latin America and the Caribbean and used lynching to challenge the notion that the United States offered a superior political or democratic system. Further, he was outraged at American prejudice toward Mexicans and Latin Americans, particularly when it was accompanied by notions of Anglo superiority. In response, he cleverly per-

Execution Scene in Los Angeles, Cal.



By the Vigilance Committee

For Ramírez, lynching became a specifically American crime, one that revealed what he believed to be the true nature of U.S. politics. Like African American activists later in the nineteenth century, he recognized that lynching could be used to spur public opinion regarding civil and political rights.

A "border ruffian" known as Boston Daimwood allegedly murdered a poor miner in Los Angeles. Daimwood and his three companions were hanged by a mob of armed vigilantes from the portico of the old city hall. A boy named Wood, jailed for stealing chickens, was also hanged.

DAIMWOOD 5, 1865 (2004), COURTESY OF KEN GONZALES-DAY

formed America in *El Clamor Público*, writing and publishing editorials that challenged the American rhetoric around equality, and exposing what he perceived as a hypocritical distance between U.S. political ideology and lived practice. Lynching scholarship frequently periodizes lynching, distinguishing lynching as outlaw or community justice in the absence of formal or effective courts from the kind of racialized spectacle the term conjures today. Most scholars argue that the shift toward understanding lynching as a particularly racial—i.e., black and white—phenomenon began in the 1870s and became the predominant view by the 1890s. Jonathan Markovitz writes that by 1882, "although some whites were lynched, lynching had clearly become a method of punishment for blacks, who accounted for nearly 85 percent of the victims."¹⁹

LYNCHING AND AFRICAN AMERICANS

However, this periodization into racial and non-racial lynching relies on the exclusion of Latinos, Native Americans, and Chinese from lynching statistics and histories in order to succeed. Most

books and articles on lynching work from related sources of information: the *Chicago Tribune's* coverage of lynchings and yearly tally of lynching incidents; Ida B. Wells's anti-lynching pamphlets, which contained graphic descriptions of lynchings and statistical information culled from the *Chicago Tribune*; editorials from newspapers in both the North and South, many of them collected for additional circulation in NAACP publications such as *Burning At Stake* and *Thirty Years of Lynching*; the Tuskegee Institute's extensive collection of articles on lynching, lynching photographs, and lynching statistics; and NAACP Secretary Walter White's influential book, *Rope and Faggot: A Biography of Judge Lynch*, (which used information gathered by Ida B. Wells but fails to cite her).²⁰ While these are all useful sources in that they represent extensive documentation of lynchings, they nevertheless circulated within a particular political economy in which the definition of "lynching" was imbued with a specific agenda that figured lynching as a specifically racialized crime perpetuated by Southern whites against African Americans.²¹

There is evidence that some anti-lynching activists working to frame lynching as a crime perpetrated primarily against African Americans purposefully elided evidence that lynching targeted other racialized groups. For example, a 1904 statistical analysis of lynching by historian James Elbert Cutler includes "Indians, Mexicans, and foreigner" in his study.²² White's *Rope and Faggot* (published in 1929) reprints Cutler's tables but eliminates the category of Other altogether, mentioning the lynching of "Others" only in his discussion of foreign reparations (those instances when the U.S. government paid money to foreign governments whose citizens had been lynched in the United States).

Christopher Waldrep suggests that the impetus to pose lynching as the premier example of post-reconstruction anti-black racism affected which lynchings were picked up by the (mostly black) anti-lynching press. Citing the 1892 lynching of Francisco Torres in California, he writes "Western whites continued to lynch Mexicans with little notice from Wells or other black protesters." Similarly, the lynching of eleven Italian-Americans in New Orleans failed to attract the attention of the black anti-lynching press, although it is interesting to note that Henry Cabot Lodge "pointed to these New Orleans lynchings as proof that America needed more restrictive immigration laws to keep out people likely to be lynched."²³ Waldrep points to these incidents as proof that "with America increasingly aroused to the problem of racial violence directed toward blacks, this evidence of a generalized impulse toward extralegal violence seemed almost beside the point." However, the lynching of Francisco Torres and the New Orleans lynchings hardly represent a "generalized impulse toward extralegal violence," given that both Mexicans and Italians represented a racialized other in the late-nineteenth century United States. Newspaper coverage of the Torres lynching, for example, emphasized that he was "a short, villainous-looking Mexican" and "in no way superior to an Indian."²⁴

LYNCING OF LATINOS

The lynching of Latinos does not fit easily into a historiography that marks lynching as an increasingly racial, or even black and white, crime post-1870. A recent article by William Carrigan and Clive Webb²⁵ attempts "the first systematic analysis of Mexican lynching victims," using comparative data on African-American and Mexican lynching victims to show that while Mexicans and persons of Mexican descent were lynched in smaller numbers than African Americans, relative to population size they faced as great a threat of being lynched as African Americans during the same time period (1882–1930). Significantly, during the period following the Mexican American War (1848–1879), in the midst of heated debates about citizenship, land, and national borders, Mexicans were lynched at a rate of 473 per one hundred thousand of the population. Carrigan and Webb compare this statistic to the highest lynching rate recorded for African Americans (in Mississippi, during the years 1880–1930): 52.8 per one hundred thousand. The Tuskegee Institute, largely considered the most authoritative count of lynchings in the United States, lists only fifty lynchings of Mexicans. In contrast, Carrigan and Webb have documented the lynching of 597 Mexicans between 1848 and 1928.

There is ample evidence that Latinos were the targets of lynching violence following the annexation in Mexican territories in 1848. While historians of the West may debate whether these incidents should be understood as particularly racialized events, given that extra-legal punishment was largely the norm, it is significant that public actors such as Francisco Ramírez understood lynchings as crimes that disproportionately targeted Mexicans and Californios. Famously, in an August 28, 1855 editorial he lamented that what Anglos really wanted was for "Mexicans to have only one neck for them to sever."

El Clamor Público positioned itself explicitly as an activist newspaper, mixing local gossip, poetry, love advice, and jokes with history lessons and political editorializing. While Ramírez first tar-

geted the paper to his fellow Californios, envisioning *El Clamor Público* as a vehicle to create community among Californios and advocate for their rights in the face of growing discrimination in the courts and on the streets, he soon came to advocate for “hispano-americanos” in general, recognizing that both native Californians and immigrants from Latin America faced prejudice and discrimination that failed to account for actual national origin. In a June 1856 editorial, for example, Ramírez remarked “we have placed as our primary goal to serve as an organ of the general sentiments of the Spanish people, to manifest the atrocious injuries that they have been victims of in this country where they were born and now find themselves in a condition inferior even to the most unhappy of their persecutors.”

Ramírez was outraged at the way that Californios and other Latinos were being treated and acutely aware of the way that the U.S. philosophy of Manifest Destiny was a hemispheric threat. As such, he advocated “hispano-american” unity, both in California and among the Latin American nations, arguing that only through solidarity would “la raza española” have any chance of fending off the United States’ imperialist project at home and abroad. At the same time, Ramírez showed tremendous familiarity with and respect for ideas of democracy and liberalism, frequently publishing editorials and articles that extolled the promises of democracy and critiquing U.S. practices that betrayed democratic principles.

EL CLAMOR PÚBLICO’S AMBIVALENT STANCE

While lynching is a frequent subject in *El Clamor Público*, two incidents in particular are notable for prompting months of ongoing lynching reportage in the newspaper. The killing of Antonio Ruiz and the killing of Sheriff Barton, roughly a year apart, inflamed tensions between Anglos and Mexicans in Los Angeles, with lynching at the center of debate. Antonio Ruiz was a Mexican man who was shot by a local government official named W. Jenkins in a struggle to collect a debt. When word of Ruiz’s death spread, “el pueblo Español” (the Spanish populace) took to the streets.

Reports as to what they wanted to accomplish vary, even in *El Clamor Público*. Many claimed that they were merely demonstrating, demanding that Jenkins be brought to justice, but the gathering of a perceptibly “non-American” crowd around the jail prompted authorities to assume the crowd wanted to lynch Jenkins.

Ramírez summarized the conflict as follows: “The city divided into two different sides. The Spanish side hoped for justice, and the authorities, protecting the accused, enlisted the cooperation of their mercenary satellites.”²⁶ Many Mexicans were detained and held without due process, provoking further outrage. As the emergency broke, Ramírez called for order, carefully positioning the “Spanish side” as justice oriented and peaceful, even in the face of changing governments and border disputes: “The Spanish public has always wanted to keep public order and tranquility, and has submitted blindly to laws that are unfamiliar, trying nevertheless to obey them.” Apologizing for the disruption, he noted the agitation was not without context. “The death of Antonio Ruiz has exasperated the spirits of all of the Mexicans. It is becoming customary to assassinate and outrage Mexicans without impunity. Consequently they are now tired of the bullying and injustices they have suffered. . . .”²⁷ Jenkins was acquitted in only 15 minutes, and Ramírez urged his readers to accept the judgment even though “all are convinced it was a murder.” Adding insult to injury in this case, a French man, Fernando Carriega, was charged with “assault with intent to murder” and became the first defendant in the Los Angeles courts to be accused of inciting a lynch mob.²⁸

Generally, Ramírez rejected lynching violence. “We do not ask that crime be forgiven, we don’t want impunity from offenses, we just want justice and order, and we believe we are in our rights to demand that our co-citizens be delivered to legitimate authorities so that they can be publicly tried according to law, he wrote.” Further, he asks how much longer Mexicans can be expected to tolerate lynch law before retaliating: “If every individual American has the authority, just by wish-

CALIFORNIO RESPONSES TO LINCHOCRACIA

By Rodolfo F. Acuña

Joaquín Murieta, a Sonoran, is the best-known bandit in California history. Murieta and his family migrated to California during the Gold Rush from Villa San Rafael de los Alamitos, Distrito de Altar, Sonora, México. The Murieta family was twice claim-jumped, his older brother lynched, and his wife gang raped by the same mob, leaving Joaquín for dead. Unable to get justice from the system, Murieta sought revenge. Murieta became so notorious that at least forty-one Mexican bandits were assumed to be Joaquín Murieta. In 1851 and 1853, two separate companies of California Rangers chased Murieta. It is claimed that they captured and hanged Murieta and pickled his head in vinegar.

In 1852, Tiburcio Vásquez was involved in the shooting of a constable and fled to the hills. Vásquez attracted a large following among Mexicans. For more than twenty years he eluded posses, stealing from the gringo. Finally, in the mid-1870s, they captured Vásquez, and they hanged him. Vásquez's execution deepened racial divisions. Groups of Mexicanos met secretly, and the wealthy Californios feared a race war, which would include them.

A large part, if not a majority, of the Mexican miners were from Sonora. After a trial by a kangaroo court in 1851, a mob lynched a Mexican woman named Juanita, the first woman hanged in California. Popular lore rationalized that Juanita was a prostitute (implying that the lynching was unfortunate but, after all, Juanita was "only" a whore). In reality, her name was Josefa; she was not a prostitute, and in fact she was of good character and was married to a gambler, Manuel José Loaiza. As several thousand men lined the river to watch a pregnant Josefa hang at the bridge, tensions between the races hit an all-time high. After this, lynching became commonplace, and Mexicans came to know Euroamerican democracy as *Linchocracia*, a prominent theme in *El Clamor Público*.

Tired of this double standard of justice, on July 26, 1856, Francisco Ramírez wrote in *El Clamor Público* that conditions had never been as bad. Six years of assassinations had created armed camps in California. "The criminals have always escaped. Justice is almost never administered," wrote Ramírez, who attacked the European Americans' indiscriminate murder of Mexicanos, demanding an immediate cessation of violence.

The case of Antonio Ruiz strained his patience. William W. Jenkins, a deputy sheriff, alleged that Ruiz had interfered in an argument between the deputy and Ruiz's landlady. When Ruiz protested the deputy's mistreatment of the landlady, the armed Jenkins shot Ruiz in the chest. The defense based its case on discrediting the witnesses to the Mexican's death. Police officials backed Jenkins, and it took the jury only fifteen minutes to reach a verdict of not guilty. Soon afterward Jenkins returned to the task of maintaining "law and order" in Los Angeles. On May 10, 1856, Ramírez wrote, "California has fallen into the hands of the ambitious sons of North America who will not stop until they have satisfied their passions, by driving the first occupants of the land out of the country, vilifying their religion and disfiguring their customs."

ing it, to sentence to death and assassinate in secret our countrymen, we would have equal right to use similar measure and then who would be responsible for such ill-fated consequences?"²⁹

However, Ramírez's coverage of the Ruiz/Jenkins riots reveals an ambivalent relationship to the politics of lynching. On the one hand, he recognizes that lynching is disproportionately targeted toward Latinos and condemns it as an anti-democratic, anti-egalitarian barbarity. On the other hand, he does not fully reject it as a semi-legitimate form of justice. Pointing to the activities of the San Francisco Vigilance Committee, he suggests that if Mexicans did gather for the lynching, it is only because the example had been set and they had hoped the death of Ruiz would be for Los Angeles what the murder of King was in San Francisco—a catalyst for organized community justice. In reference to the lynching of Casey and Cora he noted, "the justice of the people has been just, inexorable, and loyal."³⁰

The January 1857 killing of Sheriff James Barton and his party by the Juan Flores/Pancho Daniel gang set off a rampage of vigilante action, lynchings, and heated exchanges between the *Los Angeles Star* and *El Clamor Público*. Both newspapers lamented the death of Sheriff Barton, who had been a popular and well-respected figure in Los Angeles, and called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. But as vigilante companies rounded up masses of Spanish-speaking citizens, executing as many as fifteen men within a few days, *El Clamor Público* quickly moved to denounce the events and their perpetrators, arguing on January 31 that "under the pretext of empowerment and summary execution of wrongdoers they have thrown themselves upon a few miserable victims of their unchecked appetite."

Ramírez was particularly distressed by the lynchings of Juan Valenzuela, Pedro Lopez, and Diego Navarro. While he initially claimed he did not have enough information to fully comment on the proceedings leading to their death, he noted immediately that they were "countrymen and family men," and wrote: "There are times when

the authorities do not meet their duty, and the public rises in all of its majesty to see the law carried out; but that is no reason to sacrifice four innocent victims in its fury." By February 7, he took a more radical stance, stating "we now know these men were innocent" and calling for a justice he believed was critical to the well-being of his fellow countrymen: "Because of the patriotism of certain people to exterminate wrongdoers, our best citizens have suffered intimately. We think what we are asking for is just, in line with the rights to equality, justice, and liberty that the laws confer upon us, just as much as the privilege of having been born here."

Although *El Clamor Público* has been characterized by some as an anti-lynching paper, it was not until these lynchings in early 1857 that Ramírez moved to explicitly condemning lynching. Prior coverage of lynching was, as noted above, relatively ambivalent about the practice itself and generally focused on biased application of lynch law. Ramírez emphasized notions of "equality, justice, and liberty" in his discussions of lynching, mobilizing the rhetoric of U.S. republicanism in order to stress the ways in which "the Spanish speaking populace" had tried to adapt to their new country. But on February 28, 1857, *El Clamor Público* printed a letter calling for an end of "lynch law, because it is horrifying, repulsive, inquisitorial, and contrary to the Constitution. . . ." Elsewhere in the same issue he emphasized:

The laws are really the *only will of the people*, that we should know, respect, and obey. If the laws are bad, let them be abrogated or corrected by our legally elected representatives—not by force. Should a man be allowed to kill his equal (insensate) and call himself *the people*? How about twenty or a hundred men or *the whole county*? No! All of our safety rests in faithful and constant adherence to the laws.

For Ramírez, lynching became a specifically American crime, one that revealed the true nature of U.S. politics and the way that an investment in Anglo supremacy undermined democratic claims.

On March 21, 1857, he printed a letter that described in gruesome detail the lynchings in San Gabriel, quoted here at length:

. . . it is impossible to find expressions that can describe the scene that took place and that has been told to me by many trustworthy witnesses. The body was thrown to the ground in the middle of the crowd. A creature with a human face comes forward, a knife in hand, rolls up its sleeves, with one hand grabs the dead man's head by its long hair, separates it from its body, flings it to the side, thrusts his dagger into the heart of the body, and then, returning to the head, rolls it with his foot among his band and the people, amidst the shouts and hurrahs of most of them. Many others dismount and each one thrusts his knife into the body of the dead, shouting a thousand curses. — The first to follow the lead of the beheader was a certain Dorsey, surveyor of land in Los Angeles! [. . .] Another patrol arrives from another part with two Californios: they have been arrested as suspects: one of them going to look for some cattle, the other at his daily work: they are taken to the center of the mass: the shouts: "To death! To death!" are heard from all sides: the beheader enters his house, emerges with some ropes, and the two unfortunates are hung despite the protests of their compatriots and families: once hoisted into the tree, the ropes break, and the wretches are finished to the death by bullets and blows. The beheader was tired, or his knife no longer cut! —Perhaps you think that the executioner was an Indian from the mountains, one of those barbarians who lives far away from civilization, in the Sierra Nevada! Wrong! That barbarian, that mutilator of cadavers is . . . the justice of peace in San Gabriel! . . . Hurray! May he live! *He is a citizen of the United States, a pure blooded American.* [Emphasis added.]

El Clamor Público's editorializing here reveals a careful attention to questions of racial purity, contrasting the alleged "barbarism" of "savage" Indians with the actions of "pure-blooded Americans." This was a particularly important issue for Ramírez, who resented the ways in which Americans used the mixed blood status of Mexicans and Californians to justify discrimination in the courts and land titling. At the same time, *El Clamor Público* displayed significant bias against Native Americans, particularly when it came to coverage of violence and/or issues of civil rights. Historian Gail Bederman's study on constructions of masculinity and manliness in the early 1900s references the ways in which the discourse around white "manliness," black "savagery," and lynching was constructed in relationship to other tropes of racialized masculinity. She notes that anti-lynching editorials frequently condemned white lynch mobs for being "as despicably unmanly as primitive African or Indian savages." As an example, she points to a 1904 *Minneapolis Tribune* editorial that stated: "A community capable of [lynching] has sunk lower in the human scale than Sixteenth century Iroquois or Nineteenth century Apaches." Bederman argues "by linking unmanly, unrestrained lynching with nonwhite 'savages,' these editorialists reinforced the association of manliness with 'the white man'."³¹ While this letter draws on the same tropes of savagery versus civilization, in the context of *El Clamor Público*, it also works to challenge American claims to any kind of racial or political superiority.

Significantly, this letter is accompanied by a lengthy editorial about U.S. incursions into Mexico, complaining that Mexico was being pieced off to the point where it would soon cease to exist. Calling the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo "cowardly," he asks why the United States feels itself called to dominate America, and rallies for the South to cut off trade with the North because "the rivalry between both races is irreconcilably pronounced." The next week, a letter signed "A Son of the Country" responds to the lynching of

Encarnación Berreyesa by saying, "Be so kind as to tell [the Americans] not to pronounce the words *liberty* and *constitution*. They are words devoid of meaning and in their mouths a bitter irony. Cuba no longer wants her liberty, Central America even less, and the constitution is a dead tome, buried in the tomb with Washington!" The *Los Angeles Star* responded on May 9 by noting that the lynching of Berreyesa "served as a text for one or more of those tirades against the injustice and oppression said to be practiced by the American people against the citizens of native birth, for which that paper has become notorious of late."

REPRESENTATIONS IN ENGLISH- AND SPANISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS

The *Los Angeles Star* hotly contested *El Clamor Público*'s version of the events of January 1857, noting "having seen in the *Clamor Público* of Saturday January 31, a false account of the events at San Gabriel, we deem it necessary to give a correct statement of facts as they were."³² Offering a detailed challenge to Ramírez's version of events, the article ended by asserting "The story of one of them falling dead in the arms of his wife, never had any truth to it, but is one of that class of articles which has too often for the last year, appeared in that incendiary publication, called *El Clamor Público*." A few weeks later, on February 21, the *Star* blamed *El Clamor Público* for the racial tensions in Los Angeles saying "it tended directly to created and excite a hostile feeling between the two races of inhabitants, which course has been adhered to during the calamitous events which have so deeply agitated the community within the past few weeks."

While it is true that *El Clamor Público* had a political and activist agenda, the *Star*'s coverage of events must be understood as equally compromised. The *Star* rarely reported on lynchings of Latinos, and often only in response to allegations in *El Clamor Público*. A careful comparison of reporting in the *Los Angeles Star* and *El Clamor Público* reveals that *El Clamor Público* initiated most coverage of lynching and other violences

against Latinos, editorializing on violent events in such a way that prompted response from the *Star*. In the limited cases where both papers covered lynchings at the same time, the papers split on cause and meaning of the events. The *Los Angeles Star*, while avoiding the explicit slurs and racist remarks sometimes found in other California papers, nonetheless worked to minimize the meaning or impact of violence, accusing *El Clamor Público* of trying to stir up controversy and ill-feeling between "Americans" and "the Spanish population." Even in early bilingual editions of the *Los Angeles Star*, coverage of lynching violence in the English and Spanish language editions were notably different.

The Spanish language section of the *Star* was edited first by Manuel Clemente Rojo and later by Francisco Ramírez, just months before he started *El Clamor Público*.³³ The section included notices of lynchings that were nowhere to be found in the English language section, including the February 1855 lynching of a Californio man named Salvador Valdez and his two Chilean accomplices, José Stode and Juan P. Gonzalez. Ramírez commented that he would make "no comment on these notices because many people in this city know Salvador Valdez, and know his character better than I do." In the same edition, on February 8, 1855, Ramírez wrote of two other lynchings, both "Americanos" and observed "Lynch law . . . reigns supreme in California," noting that even though the courts had already convicted one of the suspects, the people nevertheless took possession of the wretch and hung him from a tree.

Later the same month, the Spanish section printed two articles on the mistreatment of Californios, but the English language section included no such commentary. In contrast, when a Californio or Mexican committed a crime, the English language section was more likely to carry an extended discussion of the story than the Spanish language section. On December 10, 1853, for example, the paper reported that Irish-born constable Jack Wheeler went into the Sonoran camp to arrest a

man named Jesus Senate, who was wanted for murder. The English language section reported that Senate “plunged a long knife twice through Jack’s breast. . . passing through his heart.” Senate fled and no one chased him because, according to the *Star*, “no American was near.” The “sheriff, the rangers, and the citizens” (all, presumably, “Americans”) pursued the murderer but “he eluded them all.” The article goes on to extol Wheeler’s bravery and efficiency as a police officer, in contrast to “the desperate character of the man he arrested,” a man “known to be a murderer” who had been “lurking about” for months. After describing the burial procession and funeral, the paper warned: “There was much excitement and many threats were uttered against the whole mixed race, but we are glad that our order loving citizens have not added another blot to the unenviable annals of the city.” This, the paper stressed, showed particular restraint given that “the assert has been made that Sonorian thieves and murderers are harbored and assisted in our midst.” The paper accused Sonorans of aiding in Wheeler’s murder, noting that they consorted with Senate “in the most intimate manner” and although “we saw the butchery, yet not a finger moved to arrest him nor would a tongue wag to tell his name or description.” The *Star* defended the threats made “against the whole mixed race” by pointing out: “It was this circumstantial complexity which caused the threats. Such was the excitement that a single word would have kindled that whole camp into a blaze.” The Spanish-language section included only a brief notice of the event, describing the attempted arrest and subsequent fleeing of the suspect.

The difference in reporting between *El Clamor Público* and the *Los Angeles Star* is consistently different, and scholars who rely only on English-language sources for documentation of lynching miss an important archival source that documents not just the fact of lynching but the way that diverse communities used lynching as part of larger cultural and political struggles. Pointing to the frequency of anti-lynching and related reporting, historian Leonard Pitt suggests that *El*

Clamor Público documented the “five worst years of the confrontation with the Yankees.”³⁴ But if 1855–1859 seemed to be among the most violent and confrontational years in Los Angeles, it is primarily because *El Clamor Público* offers a record of violence against Mexicans, Californios, and other Latin Americans that might otherwise be absent from the public record. Indeed, Ramírez recognized that the local horror of lynching signified beyond the actual act of violence and his newspaper performs the notion of “America” or “American” in fascinating ways.

El Clamor Público’s coverage of lynching posits a clear relationship between violence, racial or ethnic equality, and the purported democratic values the United States claimed to offer Latin America and the Caribbean. Like African American activists later in the century, Ramírez recognized that lynching could be used to spur public opinion regarding civil and political rights. *El Clamor Público* is an important source material for lynching historians, providing not only evidence that Latinos were subject to lynching violence, but also an early case study of how marginalized groups have used lynching to challenge U.S. claims to democratic values. Ramírez clearly understood lynchings as events that resonated with larger ideas about justice and democracy, and he included lynchings among the evidence that the United States had not lived up to promises regarding equality, freedom, or justice. This is, I think, particularly resonant given the ways that lynching has recirculated in recent years, and given the current efforts to crack down on immigration and secure the border, official efforts that have been supplemented and facilitated by groups such as the Minute Men, who use a range of extra-legal strategies to perform their own ideas about who should have access to and agency in the United States.³⁵ Newspapers such as *El Clamor Público* offer not just archival evidence of violence against Latinos, but a repertoire of civic engagement with public violence, a history of struggle and resistance that acknowledges the ways in which lynching has long been used as a performance of and against U.S. democratic claims.

DON ANDRÉS PICO ON THE TRANSLATION OF LAWS INTO SPANISH

This transcription of a speech given before the California Assembly not only addresses an interesting issue—the inadequate translation of state laws into Spanish—but is also an excellent example of the rhetorical devices used in formal political speech in the nineteenth century: false humility in the introductory comments, argumentation and defense of a given position, and use of a deceptively polite rhetorical question to shame the opposition. It ran in the April 10, 1858, issue of El Clamor Público.

—Armando Miguelez

Mr. President: Only rarely do I address this assembly with my observations. My lack of ability, my bashfulness, and the language that I speak make anything I might say of little interest. However, on this occasion I would ask for your indulgence during the short time that I need to make a few observations regarding the report presented by the joint

commission named to examine the proposal for the translation of our laws into Spanish and the issue of awarding the translation to the most qualified individual. . . .

The report prepared by this tiny minority states that "each of the individuals who made a proposal came highly recommended to the commission, and we are of the opinion that all were competent to comply with the law in regards to this assignment." But the Honorable Representative from Santa Barbara is fully aware that I do not know either of the two candidates in whom he shows so much interest, nor do I know whether they have anything in their favor other than working for low fees and for a price that would not adequately compensate someone for the quality of work that is required here. . . .

The Spanish population of California wants to have a clear, precise, and understandable version of state laws. We all know that some of the translations done previously have not been done carefully. There are published laws that are completely unintelligible

DON ANDRÉS PICO SOBRE LA TRADUCCIÓN DE LAS LEYES AL ESPAÑOL

Esta transcripción de un discurso presentado ante la Asamblea de California no sólo toca un tema interesante—la inadecuada traducción al español de las leyes del estado—, sino que también es un ejemplo excelente de los mecanismos retóricos usados en los discursos políticos formales del siglo XIX: falsa humildad en los comentarios introductorios, argumentación y defensa de una postura y uso de una pregunta engañosamente cortés para humillar a la oposición.

Señor presidente: —Pocas veces molesto a la asamblea con mis observaciones. Mi incapacidad, mi cortedad, y el idioma que hablo no permiten que ninguna cosa que yo diga le sea interesante. En la ocasión presente suplico su indulgencia por el corto tiempo necesario para hacer algunas observaciones al informe de la memo [sic] del comité mixto nombrado para examinar las propuestas para la traduc-

ción de las leyes al español, y adjudicar la traducción al individuo más competente. . . .

El informe de esta ínfima minoría asienta que "todos los individuos que hicieron propuestas fueron altamente recomendados al comité, y que nosotros somos de opinión que todos eran competentes para hacer el servicio con arreglo a la ley". Pero bien sabe el Sr. Representante de Santa Bárbara que no conozco a ninguno de los dos candidatos por quienes tanto interés manifiesta, ni sé que tengan más mérito que el de ofrecer trabajar barato y a un precio que no recompensa el servicio si éste se ha de hacer como se debiera. . . .

El interés de la población española en California es tener las leyes del estado en un lenguaje claro, preciso y castizo. ¡Cuán sabido es que no han sido siempre traducidas con esmero! Leyes impresas hay que son enteramente ininteligibles, y otras que dicen en español cosas del todo distintas que en inglés. En los condados del sur del estados, por un

and others that say things in Spanish that are total-
ly different from the English-language version. In
the southern counties in this state, the previous leg-
islature passed a decree by which many court pro-
ceedings are carried out in Spanish. A considerable
number of justices of the peace come from the
Spanish community, and for a number of reasons it
is absolutely necessary that the laws be available in
a language that everyone understands. Further-
more, the laws that have been translated into
Spanish are distributed and read in Mexico and in
many South American countries and even in Spain
and the Spanish possessions, also in the Antilles
and the Sea of China. The truth is that California has
not always come off looking good, especially given
that it is considered to have a wealth of talented
men who are able to excel and still there are so
many reasons to criticize the poor Spanish used in
these translations.

The majority of the commission is sure that Mr.
Brodie is capable of translating the laws the way

they should be. If anyone would like proof, we can
produce certificates and recommendations from
many high-ranking people in this state who are qual-
ified to give an opinion on this issue. They would
say—and they would be right—that there is proba-
bly no other person in California who has such a
thorough and practical knowledge of Spanish and
its connections with English, and that he merits
consideration above and beyond any other person
for the post of translator of the laws of California.

The fees proposed are moderate, and the small dif-
ference that exists between this proposal and the
other two should not override our consideration of
quality. Would the gentleman from Santa Barbara,
Mr. Heath, have me believe that he does not know
that many unfortunate victims have been unfairly
judged and convicted in different courts in this state
due to poor interpreting and badly translated laws?

Therefore, I hope that the Assembly will concur with
the Senate and adopt the majority report.

(TRANSLATED BY CYNTHIA GIAMERINO)

Decreto de la legislatura anterior, los procedimien-
tos en los tribunales en muchos casos, se conducen
en español; un número considerable de los jueces
de paz son de la población española, y por todos
los motivos es indispensablemente necesario que las
leyes estén en un lenguaje a la comprensión de
todos. Además, nuestras leyes traducidas al español
circulan y son leídas en México, en todas las repúbli-
cas sudamericanas y aún en España y las poses-
iones españolas, en las Antillas y en el Mar de
China y ciertamente no siempre ha sido de los más
decoroso ni honroso para California en donde se
supone que hay hombres de talento y capaces de
hacer en cuanto se emprenda que haya habido tanta
cuidado para criticar el lenguaje tan poco castellano
en se hayan revestidos.

La mayoría del comité tiene una seguridad de que el
Sr. Brodie es capaz de hacer la traducción de las
leyes tal como se quiere. Si se quisiesen pruebas de
esta verdad, podrían amontonarse certificados y

recomendaciones de muchas personas de este esta-
do de alta categoría y de conocimientos que les dan
título de ser jueces en la materia. Dirían y con ver-
dad, que tal vez no existe en California alguna otra
persona que tenga un conocimiento más íntimo y
práctico de la lengua castellana en conexión con la
inglesa, y que es digno de ser preferido a cualquier
otro para el puesto de traductor de las leyes de
California.

La compensación es moderada, y la corta diferencia
de las dos propuestas, no debe tomarse en consid-
eración con abandono de la clase de la obra. ¿Me
dirá el caballero de Santa Bárbara, Mr. Heath, si no
sabe que muchas desgraciadas víctimas han sido
injustamente sentenciadas y condenadas, por los
diferentes tribunales de este estado por haberse
empleado intérpretes incapaces o mal traducidas
leyes?

Por tanto espero que la Asamblea se apegue con el
Senado adoptando el informe de la mayoría.

“Californios! Whom Do You Support?”

El Clamor Público's Contradictory Role in the Racial Formation Process in Early California

By José Luis Benavides

Most of the academic literature on *El Clamor Público* has pointed out the role of the newspaper as a defender of the rights of Mexicans in a particularly violent era during California history. This essay explores some of the complexities of the newspaper's coverage of other nonwhite groups and how it either contested notions of white supremacy or simply reproduced them. A sophisticated reading and analysis reveals that the ambiguous social standing of California's Spanish-speaking communities at the time played a part in *El Clamor's* coverage of violence and discrimination against three other nonwhite groups: African Americans, Chinese, and Indians.

During the 1850s, California went through a “racial formation process,” which codified the racial status of different groups in the state.¹ On the one hand, white males were granted full political rights, favorable judicial treatment, access to free labor markets, and high social standing. On the other hand, people of color were denied the right to vote and the right to testify in court against whites. They were also blocked from unrestricted access to free labor markets, and they were denied equal social status with whites.

Some Californios enjoyed a unique, privileged status compared to American Indians, Blacks, and Chinese because California's constitution

established that “white male” Mexicans had the same political rights as other white European men.² As Tomas Almaguer has argued, this “decision enabled the Californio elite to utilize their status as free white citizens to effectively challenge and resist more onerous measures European Americans used to subordinate other racialized groups in California.”³

But because the determination of who is “white” is a social construct, Mexicans were perceived as being white or nonwhite depending on nonracial factors such as class, religion, ancestry, and language.⁴ This dichotomy of Californio “whites” versus Californio “*mestizos*” (people with mixed blood) created an ambiguous social status for some mixed-race Californios: At times they were considered white, and at other times they were considered nonwhite. This was the case for Manuel Domínguez, a *mestizo* whom historian Leonard Pitt called “one of the most respected Californios” and who served as a Los Angeles-elected delegate to the convention that drafted the state constitution in 1849. In San Francisco in 1857, however, he was considered Indian by a judge who did not allow him to testify in court because the law denied people of color the right to testify against a white person.⁵

It is precisely this conflicting social standing of Californios—privileged yet subordinate—that makes the study of public discourse about race in the United States during the mid-nineteenth century important. This was a time when the formation of new racial hierarchies was at the

forefront of society after the end of the U.S.-Mexico War, and the legal and social standing of Spanish-speaking communities was diminished.

Spanish-language newspapers of that era were some of the few public venues in which racialized public discourses that challenged and resisted white supremacy were articulated, even though this defiance could carry a high price for journalists. The editor of *El Clamor Público*, Francisco P. Ramírez, recognized this danger. He informed his readers that a grand jury decided not to prosecute a Los Angeles justice of the peace who had decapitated a dead Mexican man wrongly suspected of killing a sheriff and who had been in charge of the hanging of three other innocent Mexican suspects. Ramírez then wrote:

We know very well that in denouncing these criminals we exposed ourselves to be assassinated at any time, but we are just fulfilling our duty as journalists, and we know that in doing this we are supported by all the good citizens and by our compatriots.⁶

In this analysis of *El Clamor's* coverage, three principal themes are explored: the representations of Blacks, Chinese, and Indians when reporting instances of racial conflict and violence; generalizations about nonwhite, non-Latino groups; and stereotypical representations of these groups.

SOCIAL CONTROL AND ACTIVISM, TWO CONTRADICTIONARY ROLES OF THE PRESS

According to Félix Gutiérrez, who has closely studied Spanish-language journalism in the nineteenth-century Southwest, two social roles the press performed were as institutions of social control and of activism.⁷ Regarding the former, Gutiérrez argues that some Spanish-language media were products, in financing and content, of the conquering Anglo-Americans.⁸ Here Gutiérrez talks primarily about Spanish-language sections of English-language newspapers. Government advertising contracts to translate into Spanish and publish new laws helped to estab-



During the 1850s, racial status in California became codified, and whites enjoyed privileged status. Mexicans were perceived as being white or nonwhite depending on class, religion, ancestry, and language. Mixed-race Californios, such as Manuel Domínguez, had ambiguous social status. Although Domínguez served as a Los Angeles delegate to the constitutional convention in 1849, in 1857 he was considered Indian by a judge who did not allow him to testify in court.

*Spanish-language newspapers such as *El Clamor Público* were some of the few public voices that challenged white supremacy.*

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TICOR/PIERCE COLLECTION,
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

lish and sustain these publications, at the same time ensuring that the dominated group of Californios learned about the laws that codified white supremacy in terms of economic, political, and social rights. Spanish speakers were hired, usually at lower salaries, to translate content that generally reproduced ideas of white supremacy and Californio inferiority.

The *Santa Barbara Gazette* (1855–1858) is a good example of the role of the press as an institution of social control. Since Californios constituted 95 percent of the population of that village and its county, Anglo owners established the *Gazette* with a Spanish-language section, *La Gaceta*. The *Gazette* and *La Gaceta* were “a publishing forum for Anglo viewpoints.” The content of the newspaper promoted a worldview in which Californios found their stories ignored and their subordinate status reinforced.⁹ *La Gaceta* lasted only six months. In this case, social control ambitions wilted in the face of strong resistance on the part of Californios, who organized a boycott against the paper.¹⁰

Papers acting as institutions of activism proved willing “to make statements reflecting the collective outrage of communities suffering systematic violence and discrimination.” The key point here is how Spanish-language newspapers became defenders of the rights of Californios and other Spanish-speaking communities. Gutiérrez here uses the example of *El Clamor Público*, which “gained an activist reputation for hard-hitting attacks on the behavior of the Yankee conquerors and for consistent defense of the rights of the Californios.”¹¹

In a similar vein, William Carrigan and Clive Webb have recently suggested that Spanish-language newspapers such as Los Angeles’s *El Clamor* and Tucson’s *El Fronterizo* (1879–1929) were part of the Chicano resistance to ethnic violence in the Southwest, providing accounts of lynchings of Chicanos that were more accurate than those published in the English-language press.¹²

The white mainstream press continued to accept the actions of lynch mobs largely without question. Mexican American newspapers therefore provided an important counternarrative to the conventional discourse of ethnic violence.¹³

El Clamor Público’s strong defense of the rights of Californios is reflected in the negative reaction of Anglo commentators. In 1857, Los Angeles Assemblyman Joseph Lancaster Brent accused *El Clamor* of spreading “sentiments of treason and antipathy among the native population.”¹⁴ On February 7, 1857, the *Los Angeles Star* called *El Clamor* an “incendiary publication” because, it claimed, *El Clamor*’s reports about the killing of Mexicans in San Gabriel were inaccurate (*El Clamor*’s coverage was actually the more correct). In a heated exchange between the papers, the *Star* accused *El Clamor* of creating and exciting “hostile feelings between the two races of inhabitants”¹⁵ On June 19, 1858, another Los Angeles newspaper *Southern Vineyard* argued that Ramírez had transformed *El Clamor* “into a Mexican and Anti-American organ, instead of employing his abilities and influential position to the softening of the asperities and the harmonious commingling of two races. . . .”

But what was the predominant role of the paper in covering and portraying other nonwhite groups? Did the newspaper merely reproduce dominant notions of white supremacy? Or did it contest these racist notions? Some of the attitudes of *El Clamor* indicate that the newspaper contested notions of white supremacy. For example, it was an openly abolitionist newspaper at a time when the predominant view, especially in southern California, was the opposite. The newspaper received constant attacks from other newspapers. The *San Francisco Herald* called *El Clamor* “the most violent of all the Free-Nigger organs in the State.”¹⁶ After Ramírez’s failed attempt to get elected as an assemblyman in the Los Angeles election of 1858, the *Los Angeles Star* editorialized against him, pointing out the “pernicious principles” of Ramírez: “Should such a calamity as having a

Black Republican to represent us in the Legislature ever befall Los Angeles county, there is no one better entitled to that bad pre-eminence than Mr. Ramírez."¹⁷

Also, in talking about its mission, *El Clamor* on one occasion addressed issues of diversity related to other people of color, at least indirectly. In an advertisement first published on March 26, 1856, the paper described itself as an independent newspaper advocating for material progress "while firmly resisting the attempts to degrade and proscribe any kind of people because of the diversity of their national origin, creed, or religion."¹⁸ It is difficult to assess how much importance Ramírez gave to this statement, but it does directly contradict the status quo in California, where nonwhite Mexicans were denied full citizenship rights, Chinese were legally prevented from becoming citizens, American Indians were being exterminated, and African Americans faced discrimination hardly less violent.

THE OTHER CALIFORNIANS AND WHITE PRIVILEGE

California's constitution placed white Californios in a privileged position compared to mixed-blood Mexicans, Indians, Chinese, and Blacks. Only white European and white Mexican males were granted citizenship, while legal rights were denied to Indians and Blacks—with *mestizos* classified as either white or Indian depending on their pigmentation and other factors. The California Civil Practice Act, for example, insisted that "no Indian or Negro shall be allowed to testify as a witness in any action in which a white person is a party." Later, in *People v. Hall* (1854), the California Supreme Court threw out the murder conviction of George Hall because it was based on the testimony of two Chinese witnesses; the justices decided that the terms *Indian* and *Negro* were generic racial categories and included the Chinese, who were classified as nonwhite and therefore "had no rights that a white man was bound to respect."¹⁹

Although the Constitutional Convention did not allow slavery in California, it made sure to maintain the subordinate political status of Blacks in the state. As Almaguer states, "They were denied the rights to vote, to hold public office, to testify in court against white persons, to serve on juries, to attend public schools, or to homestead public land."²⁰ Several white politicians wanted to prevent Black migration to California, and although they were unable to do so during the convention, they submitted bills in the California state legislature in 1850, 1851, 1855, 1857, and 1858 that would have prohibited Black immigration. The Black population of California grew at a slow pace during a period of heavy migration of whites to the state, from one thousand in 1850 to only four thousand in 1860.²¹

Indians in California suffered an accelerated extermination in the second half of the nineteenth century. California's Indian population plummeted from 150,000 in 1845 to fewer than 30,000 in 1870.²² Indians were viewed as ugly, primitive people. They were called "diggers," a short version of the pejorative description "root diggers."²³ The subordination of Indians was guaranteed by various legal means. The state of California "directly subsidized 'private military forays' against the California Indians," something that provoked several massacres.²⁴ Indians were not eligible for citizenship, not even "civilized" Indians who owned property and paid taxes.²⁵ The Indenture Act and Vagrancy Act of 1850 allowed the use of Indians as bond servants, creating what was known as the Sunday slave mart:

The Indians were first caught like cattle and accused of being vagrants. They would be condemned to labor for a period and when the period was almost over they would be induced to drink hard liquor. Drunkenness almost inevitably followed, fines resulted, and another period of forced labor followed that.²⁶

LITERARY VOICES

BY RODOLFO F. ACUÑA

The most lasting contribution of *El Clamor Público* was the bright light it shed on early Los Angeles society, particularly in the literary field. Ramírez, in association with Spanish-language newspapers throughout the nineteenth century, was a literary beacon. Here were people deemed not worthy of equality that produced literature and had greater knowledge of Latin America than of their European American neighbors. The *Clamor* gave a voice to intellectuals such as José Elías González, a poet.

Tu cabellera es de oro;

Tu talle esbelto, ligero;

Eres mi bien, mi tesoro,

El ídolo que venero.

Your long hair is golden,

Your figure well-shaped, lithe;

You are my love, my treasure,

The idol I venerate.

The Indenture Act also gave people in the state legal means to take custody of Indian minors and make them into “virtual slaves” in an apprenticeship system.²⁷

Chinese people, in contrast, migrated in large numbers to California during the 1850s. The number of Chinese people in the state went from 2,716 in 1851 to 34,935 in 1860. Chinese migrants—overwhelmingly male—settled in San Francisco and in rural and mining areas of Northern California.²⁸

Whites found Chinese “distasteful” in their “physical appearance, language, manner of dress, food, religion, and social customs.” They were seen as “heathen” and “uncivilized.”²⁹ Thus, they were considered nonwhite, and they were ineligible for citizen rights. Furthermore, they were discouraged from competing with white miners. The mining tax law of 1852 affected all foreign miners, but “the Chinese were the primary targets of this social closure.”³⁰ The law required payment of three dollars monthly by every miner who was not a citizen, and the Chinese simply could not become citizens.

Different Latino groups that migrated to California attracted by gold mining (Sonorans, Chileans, and Peruvians) quickly stopped migrating to the state after Anglos came to power. Sonoran miners, for example, migrated to California starting in 1848, and their migration peaked in 1850 but declined rapidly until it practically ceased by 1854.³¹

With regard to Californios, the most dramatic demographic phenomenon was their sharp decline from majority status due to the rapid migration of American and European whites. Almaguer estimates that in 1848 there were ten thousand Mexicans in California, and by 1860, using census figures, Wright estimates only 11,970 Latinos—including 9,150 Mexicans, 2,250 South Americans, 100 Central Americans, and 470 Spaniards, a small fraction of the total half-million inhabitants of the state by 1860.³²

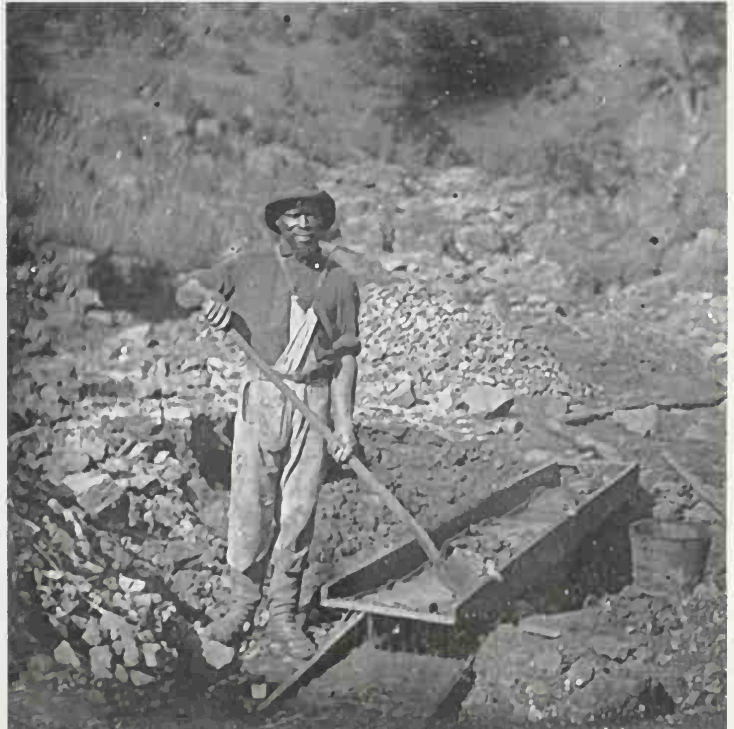
In Los Angeles, this dramatic demographic shift turned Latinos into a small minority population in a span of thirty years. While the non-Spanish-surnamed population grew from 18 percent of the total population in 1850 to 80 percent by 1880, the Latino population decreased from 82 percent of the total population in 1850 to 58 percent in 1860, to 25 percent in 1870, and to less than 20 percent in 1880.³³

In the new white-dominated state, Californios helped both to shape and to challenge California's racial hierarchy, which promoted the idea of white supremacy. Seven Californios formed part of the Constitutional Convention and articulated some of the contradictory notions of race that simultaneously questioned and perpetuated racial prejudice.

Californio Pablo Noriega de la Guerra is a good example. As a Santa Barbara delegate to the convention, he contested and reinforced white supremacy at the same time:

Many citizens of California have received from nature a very dark skin; nevertheless, there are among them men who have heretofore been allowed to vote, and not only that, but to fill the highest public offices. It would be very unjust to deprive them of the privilege of citizens merely because nature had not made them white. But if, by the word "white" it was intended to exclude the African race, then it was correct and satisfactory.³⁴

The coverage of *El Clamor Público* reflects this conflicting stance about race and racial hierarchies. The newspaper both challenged and perpetuated the ideology of white supremacy in its coverage of other nonwhite groups, performing at the same time the two roles of social control and activism discussed by Gutiérrez. In some instances, the newspaper disputed the established racial hierarchies, pointing out injustices committed against Blacks and Chinese, and editorializing against slavery in general. In other instances, it perpetuated the racial hierarchies: when it repro-



El Clamor Público had an ambivalent stance toward African Americans. It expressed abolitionist ideas and depicted Black immigrants as hard-working and industrious. Often, however, the paper reinforced current ideas of African American inferiority and resisted ideas that they were equal with Mexicans and whites.

UNKNOWN MINER, AUBURN RAVINE, 1852

DAGUERRETYPE ATTRIBUTED TO JOSEPH B. STARKWEATHER
COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY,
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

duced stereotypes about Blacks and Indians, did not defend the rights of Indians to equal treatment, and justified the mass killings of Indians as a "war."

AFRICAN AMERICANS: EMPATHY AND STEREOTYPING

The stance of *El Clamor Público* toward African Americans was ambivalent. Much of the paper's coverage of Blacks was positive and activist in nature. It regularly expressed abolitionist sentiments, usually in opinion articles and framed by partisan politics. On August 30, 1856, for example, the paper editorialized against the Democratic Party because of its pro-slavery attitude. At the end of the article, *El Clamor* encouraged Californios to vote Republican based on its abolitionist position: "Californios! Whom do you support? If you are in favor of restricting the extension of the traffic of human beings, then you'll support the Republican candidate. If you don't care or are for slavery, you'll support the Democratic candidate for president."³⁵

Also, *El Clamor* was able to see the contradictions between the democratic principles supposedly embraced by the government and the slavery system. In an editorial on March 22, 1856, the newspaper pointed out this contradiction when two Democratic California representatives voted for William Aiken, from South Carolina, for speaker of the House:

Mr. Aiken is owner of more than a thousand Blacks, and he is the richest man in Congress: [he has] an estate worth two million dollars. What does this say about the institutions of the Republic? The largest slaveowner occupies a seat in Congress and makes laws for the free men? Inconsistencies like these are the ones that cause laughter among Europeans, who make fun of our government. They don't understand how promoters of the worst kind of slavery can be honest in their "patriotic" speeches about equality and freedom.³⁶

The newspaper always opposed attempts to stop the migration of free Blacks to California, and it even monitored the votes of Californio legislators on this issue. On May 23, 1857, for example, the paper reported about the status of a bill of this nature:

Among those who voted against [the bill], we can say to their honor, were the names of Señores Castro and Covarrubias, because on this and other occasions, they have only been guided by the principle of justice and humanity.³⁷

In an article about another attempt to prevent free Blacks from moving to California, "The Crime of Being Born Black," *El Clamor* linked the injustices against Blacks with the injustices against other people of color, and directly challenged white supremacy in the process:

Is it just for [Blacks] to be punished because they committed the crime of not being born white? . . . Is this civilization? . . . Is this the enlightened humanity of the nineteenth century? . . . After prohibiting the entry of Chinese and charging unjust taxes to foreigners who arrive on our shores, the time doesn't seem far when they will want to remove the right to vote for the native Californios, after they see that we don't follow their hateful principles.³⁸

El Clamor strongly opposed the enslavement of Blacks in the Americas. The paper editorialized against William Walker's racist ideals for Nicaragua and Central America in general.³⁹ But the most interesting piece it published about the topic was an article reprinted from the Mexico City newspaper *El Siglo XIX* about a settlement of Black people from Louisiana along the shore of Mexico's Papaloapan River in Veracruz.⁴⁰ The English-language Mexico City newspaper *Mexican Extraordinary* had asked the Mexican government to prohibit these settlements, but *El Siglo XIX* argued that the Black immigrants from Louisiana were hard-working and industrious:



Ramírez reported lynching cases against Chinese miners and decried a tax on foreign miners: "the passage of such a bill—that preserves the riches of some and oppresses the others—can only mark the beginning of a landmark era in the history of the country that is an example of intolerance."

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, FN 4118

If we are talking about this kind of immigrants, the color is irrelevant. . . . If we are enemies of slavery, it is because the Black man is a man, because the Black man is our brother. . . . The Black man enjoys in Mexico all rights given to men by our bill of rights; he can be not only a follower, but also, if he wants, a citizen and a public official, and this is one of the accomplishments of our country.⁴¹

This positive depiction of the African American struggle for freedom both in the United States and in Latin America, however, was accompanied by some negative depictions as well, such as a scarcity of news reports about lynchings of African Americans. The newspaper did report some instances of lynchings of Black people, but its depictions were never as detailed as those of

lynchings of Californios, and they did not question the lynchings' legality. On July 31, 1855, for example, the newspaper reported that a Black man (no name provided) was burned to death by the people of Sumter County, Alabama, because he raped and killed a white woman. The paper included no more details and gave no sense of how accurate the accusation was.

Instances in which *El Clamor* reinforced ideas of Black inferiority were also common, particularly in cases in which the newspaper refused to acknowledge that Blacks and Indians were equal to Mexicans. For example, to oppose James Buchanan's election as president, the paper used a comment he made when he was a senator.⁴² In English, *El Clamor* asked, "Shall we select and support Buchanan, the man who has slandered

EL CLAMOR PUBLICO.

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NO. 6

El Clamor Publico.

Se publica a las tres de la tarde en la casa de T. J. P. en el edificio de la calle de la Iglesia, en San Francisco P. RAMIREZ.

El periodismo es la centinela avanzada de la civilizacion, su vida es una vida continua de combates, constantemente en la brecha, debe saber morir sin temor, si quiere quedar sin reproches a los ojos de la posteridad.



Los Angeles artist J. Michael Walker depicts Francisco Ramírez as a latter-day Saint Francis who, like his namesake, told his truth to all who would listen. To Walker, Ramírez is an unsung hero of early Los Angeles who should ably qualify as inspiration for any budding young journalist.

Walker has been exploring the "spiritual geography" of Los Angeles through the saints who have given their names to so many streets, neighborhoods, and topographies. They give us clues, he says, "about the world our forebears inhabited, the world we've inherited, the world we are given to act upon."

SAN FRANCISCO DE ASÍ ES: FRANCISCO P. RAMÍREZ DE LOS ÁNGELES

SUMI INK ON VINYL PAPER, 91" HIGH X 60" WIDE, 2004

COURTESY OF J. MICHAEL WALKER

the Spanish race of America, by placing them on equality with the slaves?" And in Spanish, under the heading "Insult against the Spanish Race," the paper reproduced the "insulting" comments that put Mexicans, Blacks, and Indians on equal footing: "The Mexican nation is formed by Spaniards, Indians, and Blacks, mixed in all kinds of combinations, who will receive our slaves in terms of perfect equality."⁴³ Later, on February 26, 1859, *El Clamor* published an editorial that spoke out with similar tone and content against the *San Francisco Herald* for saying that Mexicans, Blacks, and Indians were equal.

Also, *El Clamor* refused to see the negative stereotypes of Blacks that were part of the popular culture of the era. The newspaper regularly reported about visits by minstrel companies, which were usually formed by white performers impersonating stereotypical Black characters.⁴⁴ *El Clamor* did not criticize these representations of Blacks, and it recommended the shows, pointing out for example that a performer was Spanish or that the performance occurred in the house of a Californio:

The minstrel ("Negritos") company that had great success in Los Angeles two years ago has come back on the last steamer, and last Thursday they had their first performance in the house of Don Jesús Domínguez.⁴⁵

CHINESE: ACTIVIST REPORTING

Although there were fewer stories involving Chinese immigrants, *El Clamor Público* was prompt to report instances of racism against Chinese miners as well as lynchings and massacres against Chinese communities. Most of these reports were reprints from newspapers in northern California.

Two 1855 statutes that had a marginal impact on Latin Americans but had a major negative impact on Chinese people were "a \$50 head tax to discourage the immigration of people ineligible for citizenship . . . and a new foreign miners' tax

of \$5 a month."⁴⁶ On January 26, 1856, *El Clamor Público* published an article that described how the anti-Chinese sentiment of the foreign miners' law had economic consequences for everybody, whites included. The law had forced the Chinese miners to abandon the mines, causing lost revenue in sales for white merchants. This prompted newspapers to editorialize against the law:

The newspapers in the interior that relentlessly attacked the unfortunate Chinese, said *El Eco del Pacífico*, are the same papers that now oppose the law in the most flagrant way. Previously, they had said, "If we don't take an efficient means to expel from the country this population, the state of California will turn Asiatic. Why do we tolerate these people, who are less productive, consume less, and above all, cannot connect with our families?" . . . Nobody thought about these inconvenient consequences when [Chinese] were persecuted not only with this law, but also with other inhumane and barbarous attacks, and now that they feel the sour pain, people ask for the law to be changed, and they say the Chinese are honest, useful, and industrious. . . . We are glad that there is a beginning of justice for all kinds of people, regardless of nationality.⁴⁷

Three years later, on April 9, 1859, *El Clamor* again used *El Eco del Pacífico* to make ironic comments on a similar bill that aimed to increase the foreign miners' tax to fifty dollars a month:

Now, people might believe that we oppose the approval of a bill intended exclusively to benefit those who have expelled and abused the unfortunate Asians in a thousand different ways. That is not the case. Quite the opposite, we believe that such a bill will fulfill the desired goal in more than one way: first, because if the Chinese pays \$50 as a monthly license fee and the American pays \$2, the latter can continue eating chicken every day, and he wouldn't ever

complain about a rival who eats only rats; and second, since very few Chinese might venture into the mines for fear of paying \$50, an amount they may not recover after a month of work, the Americans would have less opportunities to perform those shameful shows now in vogue of expelling, hanging, and throwing out Chinese for hobby. The passage of such a bill—that preserves the riches of some and oppresses others—can only mark the beginning of a landmark era in the history of the country that is an example of intolerance. . . .⁴⁸

El Clamor also reported at least three lynching cases against Chinese individuals,⁴⁹ and some instances of general violence against Chinese communities in mining areas. The lynching stories were short and lacked the detailed descriptions of lynchings against Californios but were written in a way that follows the anti-lynching stance of the paper, particularly when torture and mutilation were involved. On October 17, 1857, for example, *El Clamor Público* ran a brief story titled “Terrible Barbarity”:

Some poor Chinese were arrested in the mines near Horsetown for robbery. They were not hanged, but were treated in the cruelest form. After they were beaten until they showed no signs of life, their *ears were cut off!* a fashion that seems to be in vogue in these times of enlightenment. Indians were paid to beat them, but it was a person of white skin who had the glory of *mutilating them*. [Italics in original.]

In two instances, *El Clamor* described how Chinese mining settlements were attacked, looted, and destroyed by whites. On March 17, 1858, the paper ran a story based on the *Sacramento Union's* account of a Chinese mining settlement near Alder Creek, where white mobs attacked the “pacific inhabitants.” The story was titled “The Chinese Are Barbarically Treated.”

Around two hundred Chinese were deprived of their homes and property. The unfortunate Chinese escaped scared to the woods looking for solitary places to hide and save their lives. The principal goal of the populace was looting, taking everything of value they could reach.⁵¹

In another instance, *El Clamor* used the French newspaper *L'Echo du Pacifique* as a source to document the expulsion of Chinese people from the mining areas.⁵² In Horsetown, the paper reported, one hundred miners got together to “sweep up” (*barrer*) all the Chinese of the neighboring districts. The sheriff tried to disperse the white miners, but they came back. The worst event happened in Shasta, where people were being stabbed. “How is this going to end?” asked *El Clamor*. “Will the law or the people prevail?”

In general, the coverage of Chinese communities, although scarce, was predominantly positive, identifying the injustices committed against them as similar to the ones committed against the constructed “us”—the community of Californios that included Ramírez and his like-minded readership. Compared to the coverage of African Americans, which included more opinion articles, *El Clamor's* coverage of Chinese communities used accounts from Californian newspapers in Spanish, English, and French to report on specific events. Thus, the coverage of Chinese communities was superior in factual reporting of events, but was weak in interpretation of the significance of those events.

INDIANS: THE SUBORDINATE OTHER

Most of the time, Indians were portrayed negatively and stereotypically in *El Clamor*, despite the fact that they were the group most affected by ethnic violence during this period. Indians had a larger presence in the Los Angeles area than Blacks or Chinese: Camarillo registered 2,014 Indians in Los Angeles County in 1860, compared to 87 Blacks and 11 Chinese individuals.⁵³

This negative coverage established that Indians were the subordinate “other” for Californios and other Spanish-language communities, helped to support ideas of racial superiority brought by white Europeans in both Mexico and the United States, and served to justify the systematic oppression and extermination of tens of thousands of Indians both by white Americans and by white and *mestizo* Californios.⁵⁴

Although the coverage of Indians was regular and more abundant than the coverage of Blacks or Chinese, *El Clamor Público* depicted the extermination of Indians in the United States and in the Americas as a war instead of as a series of massacres or as genocide. Urban and rural Indians were depicted stereotypically as savages, thieves, treacherous, alcoholics, and stupid, and the lynching of Indians was criticized only when done by American whites and not when done by Californios or individuals of other Spanish-speaking communities.

In clear contrast to the positive depiction of the African American struggle for freedom from slavery in the United States and the Americas, *El Clamor Público* depicted Indian communities in the Americas and in the United States as if they were in a senseless war with society. For example, in Mexico’s Yucatán Peninsula, in a town sixty miles from Mérida City, “Indians” were reported by *El Clamor* as “taking advantage” of the armed conflict in Mexico to enter people’s houses, where they “cut the throats of all the inhabitants of the town, regardless of sex and age. More than 500 bodies have been found, and daily more bodies are found in the surrounding woods, mutilated in the cruelest manner.”⁵⁵

Similar stories appeared regularly in *El Clamor* about Indians in Argentina, Central America, Sonora (Mexico), and the United States.⁵⁶ In some of the stories about the war against Indians in California, *El Clamor* depicted individuals with Spanish-language surnames as the ones in charge of the killings. On July 24, 1855, for example, a

story about the town of Sonora, Mexico, describes fights against Apaches. In one of these fights, the paper reported, “Don Hilarión García killed one hundred of these savages.”⁵⁷

El Clamor Público depicted urban Indians only as alcoholics. In a column titled “Stories of the Week,” for example, the paper ran a story about the death of a drunken Indian next to a story about the weather and another about commercial activity:

The week finished as usual. There is one less Indian in the hands of the worshippers of the God Bacchus. They go to better lands, because they say there is no law that prohibits them to die, and after this operation is finished, there is nothing that prohibits the entrance of their souls to infernal regions.⁵⁸

El Clamor reported a large number of killings of Indians on the streets of Los Angeles. These reports regularly implied that other Indians—usually called savages—committed these “senseless assassinations.” On September 18, 1855, the paper ran the following story about the killing of an Indian in Los Angeles:

More than twenty Indians gathered in the plaza on Sunday at 10 in the morning. After they greeted each other, one of them pulled out a knife and stabbed two of his fellows in the coldest blood possible. We believe that one of them died because he showed no signs of life for more than two hours, until his comrades took him away.⁵⁹

Sometimes, the paper did not even verify that other Indians were the guilty assassins; it just assumed that they were. On October 18, 1856, for example, the following story appeared:

Last Thursday, a dead Indian appeared in the morning under the bridge. His face was horribly mutilated. Undoubtedly, he was assassinated by one of his fellows.⁶⁰

In cases where an Indian was killed by a non-Indian, *El Clamor Público* expressed trust in the justice system—the same system it denounced

as being prejudiced against Californios. For example, on June 7, 1856, the paper ran a story about the assassination of the Indian Pedro (last names were rarely included), stabbed by Sonoran Epifanio Estrada. Estrada was in prison, but the paper wondered, "It seemed that the homicide was committed in self defense" because the Indian had insulted and threatened Estrada. The grand jury had absolved Estrada, but he was not free yet.

Something similar happened in the few instances that *El Clamor* reported lynching of Indians. On July 12, 1856, for example, the paper reported that an Indian killed a Sonoran in Watsonville, but the Indian "received at night a visit by the citizens of the place and was executed according to the Lynch Law."⁶¹ The mere fact of reporting the lynching straightforwardly, as opposed to *El Clamor's* critical reporting when Californios were lynched, shows a double standard, one for Indians and another for Californios. This double standard, although isolated, clearly shows that in terms of racial hierarchies, *El Clamor* was unable to break from a long tradition of racism against Indians in the Spanish-speaking countries of the Americas.

In one instance only, *El Clamor* portrayed Californian Indians in a positive light. In an editorial about the failure of the state's reservation of El Tejón on November 30, 1855, *El Clamor* highlighted the peaceful nature of California's Indians:

The Indians have lived peacefully since the memorable insurrection of Antonio Garra in 1851, instigated by people without scruples; they have not shown any inclination to start fighting against whites Beyond El Tejón Reservation, in a small valley surrounded by high and pretty mountains, there are small ranches inhabited by pacific and industrious Indians, who have already farmed a piece of land. They live happy there. . . . That is a true reservation that does not need government support.⁶²

Similarly, in one instance only, *El Clamor* showed the killings of Indians to be part of a racist system that denied them the right of being considered human. The opinion piece, titled "The Indians of California," was published on June 4, 1859, and was about a speech by the governor of California condemning the abuses against Indians. The article introduced the topic by using the example of the white settlers in Round Valley (Mendocino County) who killed 170 Indians in a period of six months because they allegedly stole pigs. The editorial commented:

In California, they kill an Indian as they kill a bird or a ferocious animal. The Indian race is seen as if it doesn't belong to the human family. As if it should disappear. If the isolation, the misery, and the pain . . . do not operate quickly enough, the white race intervenes and the butchery starts.⁶³

El Clamor Público was ambivalent in the face of white supremacy during a period of high violence directed toward people of color. Though the paper has earned a reputation as a defender of the rights of Californios, its coverage of other people of color reveals a more complex picture. The newspaper looked at the new racial hierarchies in California in ways that reflected the contradictory position of Californios at the time. The paper both echoed and re-created the ambivalence and the difficulties Californios faced in a social environment in which they were paradoxically privileged and subordinate at the same time. In such an environment, *El Clamor Público* displayed an admirable commitment to equal rights but undermined this message because of an inability to fully identify with other, more subordinate racial groups.

O MY MARÍA ANTONIA

In this poem, which ran in the September 11, 1855 issue, Francisco P. Ramírez addresses one of the most common themes of Romantic poetry, the pain related to ideal love. Unlike most Romantic poems, this one is rhymed and has fixed verse length (in the original Spanish version), characteristic of a typical redondilla.

—Armando Miguélez

I don't know—but I am inclined to believe
That you suffer as I do
And that the same torment
That afflicts me, afflicts you too.

I cannot say why your ill-fated luck
Is somehow linked to mine,
But it is not because the pain you feel
With my own is in some way fatally entwined.

Your sad misfortune
Is reflected in your eyes,
I see that your suffering
Is difficult to disguise.

You, who yesterday lived fully and
Enjoyed the beauty and pleasures of life,
And were the envy of all,
Are void of all strife.

Today you suffer greatly . . . as I do . . .
From the pain and confusion
Of embracing a desire
That is no more than an illusion.

You thought, little one,
That love conquers all,
But you learned a bitter lesson
When you saw all your hopes fall.

I too had dreams
I too have experienced defeat
My dreams were drowned
In a sea of deceit.

I saw them die . . .
I calmly watched them go.
They fell from the depths of my soul
Into the nothingness below.

Our souls loved
With a passion ill-fated but pure
But the love that they dreamed of
Their passion could not endure.
So you are suffering
And so am I,
And we are destined
To lament our love till the day we die.

Come, then, and sit by my side
And together we will cry,
For I too have suffered great misfortune
And to comfort one another we must try.

(TRANSLATED BY CYNTHIA GIAMBRUNO)

A MI MARÍA ANTONIA
(POEMA)

En este poema, Francisco P. Ramírez toca uno de los temas más comunes de la poesía romántica: la pena relacionada con el amor ideal. A diferencia de la mayoría de los poemas románticos, éste tiene rima y métrica establecidas características de una típica edondilla.

—Armando Miguélez

No sé—pero el pensamiento
Me dice que ambos sufrimos,
Que en un mismo tormento
Nuestras almas consumimos.

No sé por qué se encadena
Mi triste suerte a tu suerte,
Si no es que una misma pena
Nos lleva a una misma muerte.
¡Infeliz! En tu mirada
Leo tu triste fortuna
Y sé que eres desgraciada
Porque el pesar te importuna.

Tú, que ayer no más vivías
Tan hermosa entre placeres,
Y que inocente atraías
Le envidia de las mujeres.

Hoy sufres mucho . . . lo veo . . .
Sufres, como yo, el martirio
De acariciar un deseo
Que tan sólo es un delirio.

Tú pensaste, criatura,
Que un amor, amor alcanza
Y has visto que en amargura
Se ha deshecho tu esperanza.

¡Yo también sufrí un engaño! . . .
También yo tuve ambiciones,
Y en el mar del desengaño
Se ahogaron mis ilusiones.

¡Yo las vi cuando murieron . . .
Las vi en indolente calma,
Cuando al abismo cayeron
Desde el fondo de mi alma!

Si nuestras almas amaron
Con funesta idolatría,
Si el alma que se soñaron
Era una luz que no ardía.
Sí pues tú tienes tu pena
Y yo tengo mis dolores
Y la muerte nos condena,
Y llorar nuestros amores.

Ven—acércate a mi lado
Y nuestras penas lloremos:
Yo también soy desgraciado . . .
Los dos nos consolaremos.

COLLECTIONS, CALIFORNIA'S SECOND CAPITAL, PP 3, 82

Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California*, vol. III, 1825-1840 (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft & Company, 1885), p. 292.

Bancroft wrote: "Of these reasons I note the following: Monterey has been the capital for more than 70 years; both Californians and foreigners have learned to regard it as the capital; interests have been developed which should not be ignored; and a change would engender dangerous rivalries. The capital of a maritime country should be a port, and not an inland place. Monterey is a secure, well known, and frequented port, supplied with wood, water, and provisions; where a navy-yard and dock may be constructed. Monterey has a larger population than Los Angeles; the people are more cultured; and the prospects for advancement are superior. Monterey has excellent buildings for govt uses, to build which at Los Angeles will cost \$30,000; and besides, some documents may be lost in moving the archives. Monterey has central position, mild climate, fertile soil, developed agriculture; here women, plants, and useful animals are very productive! Monterey is nearer the northern frontier, and therefore better fitted for defence. It would be unjust to compel the majority to go so far on government business. It would be impossible to assemble a quorum of the dip. at Los Angeles. The sensible people, even of the north, acknowledge the advantages of Monterey. Monterey had done no wrong to be deprived of its honor, though unrepresented in congress; while the last three deputies have had personal and selfish interests in favor of the south. Bancroft," *ibid.*, p. 293, n.

EL CLAMOR PÚBLICO: RESISTING THE AMERICAN EMPIRE BY NICOLÁS KANEL, PP 10-19

On December 6, 1856, the *Star* quoted the San Francisco *Herald* as calling *El Clamor Público* the most rabid of the "Free Nigger Agents" in the state of California. The *Star* claimed that *El Clamor Público* had obtained a monopoly on city printing from the city council because it was Republican and abolitionist. For a discussion of the sparring that took place between the *Star*, a Democratic organ and supporter of slavery, and *El Clamor Público*; see William B. Rice, *The Los Angeles Star 1851-1864* (NY: Greenwood Press, 1947), pp. 152-153, 155-156.

² See José Luis Benavides' essay in this collection.

³ Actually, California's first newspaper, *The Californian*, founded in Monterey in 1846, was a bilingual newspaper, with a section published in Spanish (Dary, p. 16). The first independent Spanish-language newspaper in the state was San Francisco's *La Crónica*, started in 1854. For a chronological list of Spanish-language newspapers in California, see the appendixes in my *Hispanic Periodicals in the United States* (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2000). *El Clamor Público* was actually founded as a transfer of the Spanish-language page from the *Los Angeles Star*. It is also notable, that occasionally *El Clamor Público* would include entire sections in English or French. For instance, from September to November, 1856, *El Clamor* ran an English-language section corresponding to the duration of the electoral campaign; the *Star*, May 15, 1858, later identified John O. Wheeler, a Republican Party operative, as the actual editor of this section. For more information on Ramirez's and Wheeler's political-editorial activities, see Rice, *Star*, pp. 131-33.

⁴ *El Clamor Público*, August 28, 1855.

⁵ The term "raza" in the Spanish of the time, and still today throughout much of the Hispanic world, refers more precisely to culture or heritage rather than skin color or other physiological manifestations of blood lineage. Tomás Almaguer has explored the concepts of *raza* and race, as well as the racialization of Hispanics by Anglos in *Racial Fault Lines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

⁶ "... la defensa de los intereses morales y materiales del Sur de California ... al servicio de mis compatriotas nativos de California, generalmente de todos los hispano-americanos."

⁷ *El Clamor Público*, June 14, 1856.

⁸ Ramirez's title is the same as a contemporary Madrid newspaper, published from 1844 to 1864, that was known as a progressive, liberal organ. Ramirez may have been inspired by this title from the newspaper or from any of the books that the newspaper's imprint published as free-standing volumes. See <http://www.bne.es/ingles/microfil-c.htm> and <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/servlet/SirveObras/0135052087793496311802/p00000005.htm>.

⁹ *El Clamor Público*, January 19, 1855.

¹⁰ Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 4th edition (New York: Longman, 2000), p. 150.

¹¹ "El pueblo gime bajo el peso de los magistrados, y tan efectivas han sido las injusticias cometidas por ellos ... ¿de qué sirve que un hombre posea algo estando expuestos a perderlo todo por medio de las tecnicidades de la ley, o la malicia de los jueces y demás prosélitos?" *El Clamor Público*, December 2, 1855.

¹² "¡Hé aquí el desenfreno y la inmoralidad, que desde siete años asola y destruye los intereses de familias honradas, sancionado ahora por una ley del Estado! ¡Hasta dónde puede llegar la arbitrariedad del fuerte contra el débil, del conquistador contra el conquistado!"

¹³ "... una legislatura tan hambrienta como injusta, ha decretado que todos los terrenos serán considerados como propiedad pública ... ¡Podía hacerse una injusticia mayor? ¡Podía hacerse un insulto más descarado a los solemnes tratados de Hidalgo!"

¹⁴ "Muchos de los viejos Californios que ahora seis años se veían gozando tranquilamente la posesión de los terrenos que les legaron sus padres, se ven ahora en la miseria e indigencia más lamentable por causa de los litigios a que han sido sujetos para obtener la aprobación de sus títulos."

¹⁵ Ricardo Romo, *East Los Angeles: History of a Barrio* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), p. 24.

¹⁶ "¡Mexicanos! Ya ha llegado el tiempo para mostrarnos ante el mundo entero que somos dignos del suelo en que vivimos la luz primera. Más que nadie, tenemos nosotros ciertos derechos indisputables en la nación en que ahora vivimos. El Tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo nos ha concedido amplios privilegios para gozar libremente de nuestra vida y propiedad" (September 27, 1856).

¹⁷ *El Clamor Público*, September 5, 1855.

¹⁸ Along these lines, his "Expedición de Walker" editorial bears examination. Here he sustains an argument that Anglo-Saxons have piracy in their blood "el instinto pirático" and that it continues to manifest itself in the numerous American filibustering forays into Spanish America and the expansion of the British empire to as far away as India (August 28, 1856).

¹⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso Books, 1991).

²⁰ "... principalmente hemos puesto nuestro mayor conato en servir como órgano del sentimiento general de la raza española para manifestar las injurias atroces de que

han sido víctimas en este país en donde nacieron y en el cual ahora se ven en un estado inferior al más infeliz de sus perseguidores" (June 14, 1856).

²¹"Desde que apareció el Know-Nothingism en el elemento político de los Estados Unidos la emigración extranjera ha sufrido una disminución considerable" (August 2, 1856). See also, editorials on July 3, July 10, July 31, August 14, and October 16, 1855.

²²See August 16, 1855, for example.

²³"Nuestros lectores comprenderán que hacemos estas observaciones hablando del modo como se organizan las expediciones filibusteras en los Estados Unidos de América. Primeramente iban a enajenar el Canadá—después Texas, y otras partes de México—y por fin Cuba. Ahora Nicaragua es el núcleo de su apariencia y ambición" (April 19, 1856).

²⁴See Rodrigo Lazo, *Writing to Cuba: Filibustering and Cuban Exiles in the United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

²⁵See October 24, 1857.

²⁶See July 12, 1856.

²⁷"... al fin México desaparecería del catálogo de las naciones, o acabaría como un tercio de zarzas, vendido al menudeo por piezas y por yardas, o como el queso a rebanadas." The rhetorical stance of the letter writer is ambiguous and it is not at all clear that it is Ramírez himself writing or paraphrasing a letter he actually was privy to. For the first time, either Ramírez or the author refers to the "raza latina" in opposition to the "raza anglo-sajona." Ramírez speaks of "Latin America" and "la raza latina" precisely because he includes in his inventory Brazil and the French Caribbean, as well as the Native American populations and territories.

²⁸"Desde el cobarde tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo, y desde el innecesario de la Mesilla, se ha envanecido e infatuado Norte América, al extremo de considerarse llamada a dominar el continente de América."

²⁹See March 26, 1859.

³⁰"... en la tierra de Washington y Franklin, donde se ven a cada instante violados los derechos de la humanidad, la forma natural y viviente de cada pueblo, o invadida la soberanía de las naciones. Las conquistas efectuadas recientemente en México, desmembrando la mitad del territorio nacional, los escandalosos sucesos de la América Central, las pretensiones injustas sobre los naturales de Panamá en Nueva Granada, las reclama-

ciones de la Isla de las Aves en Venezuela, Galápagos en el Ecuador y Lobris en el Perú, las pretensiones sobre las Antillas, sea por la fuerza de las armas o por razón de la enajenación, que en el lenguaje de la moral de las naciones es la última expresión de la ignominia, etc. etc. ... aquí en compendio el mapa delineado en la imaginación desmesurada de la gran República Federal, que se extenderá hasta Buenos Aires si no se la detiene en la carrera de las conquistas. ¿Será factible esa fusión de razas y de lenguas, de costumbres y religiones, para fundar un pueblo único de cien naciones diferentes absorbiendo los estados latinos y ensanchando la democracia continental con detrimento de los intereses vecinos? No, mil veces, no, es el grito de la opinión popular y no, mil veces, no es el eco que repiten todos los miembros descendientes de la raza de Gonzalo de Córdoba y del Cid contra esta tendencia perniciosa que protegen sus leyes y principios: cada hispano-americano cual otro Aníbal en todas partes enemigos sempiternos que venguen las rapiñas y usurpaciones de su patria. ..."

³¹"California ha caído en las manos de los ambiciosos hijos de América del Norte que no la abandonarán hasta haber saciado sus pasiones, ultrajado a los primeros ocupantes del suelo de este país, vilipendiado su religión, y afeado sus costumbres. Las injusticias que cada día se repiten son una causa más para que los desgraciados ciudadanos de México, que en todo tiempo han dado muestras de su acendrado patriotismo y se han sacrificado para salvar a la patria de una ruina inevitable consintiendo a ser enajenados con sus propiedades a la República de los Estados Unidos, se vayan a otra parte para gozar tranquilamente el fruto de sus trabajos."

³²"... los mexicanos residentes en California están resueltos a emigrar a Sonora, para huir de un país inhospitalario en que tanto han tenido que padecer. Esta emigración será un borón en la historia de los Estados Unidos."

³³"... han estado sujetos todos los hispano-americanos a un tratamiento que no tiene ejemplo en la historia de ninguna nación conquistada por salvajes o por gentes civilizadas. Todos están convencidos de que California está perdido para todos los hispano-americanos" (August 2, 1856).

³⁴See, for example, "Junta para Promover la Emigración de Todos los Hispano-Americanos Residentes en California" (October 16, 1859).

³⁵According to the January 7, 1860, issue of the *Star*, what had forced *El Clamor Público* to fold were the overwhelming financial problems.

FRANCISCO P. RAMÍREZ: A SHORT BIOGRAPHY BY PAUL BRYAN GRAY, PP 20-39

¹Three of the most important books mentioning Ramírez are Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), 181-194; Douglas Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 219-222; Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Los Angeles Barrio, 1850-1890* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979), 109, 113, 115-116, 122. None of these books contain factual information about Ramírez beyond his work on *El Clamor Público*, which ended when he was twenty-three years old.

²Ramírez was born February 9, 1837, and died December 28, 1908. Because this information is generally unknown, one writer states his life span as "1830s-1890s." Matt S. Meier, *Mexican American Biographies* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 183-184.

³Abraham Hoffman, *Needs and Opportunities in Los Angeles Biography, Part 1: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Los Angeles: Historical Society of Southern California, 2002), 8.

⁴Petra Pelanconi, Ramírez's niece, untitled history of the Ramírez family, *The Grizzly Bear*, (October 1914): 1-4.

⁵Juan M. Ramírez and Jean Louis Vignes lived next to each other and had several business transactions in which they were partners. They filed a joint petition on September 7, 1840, before the Los Angeles prefect, Santiago Arguello, to raise Merino sheep on Catalina Island. On July 8, 1849, Judge Jose del Carmen Lugo approved a contract in which Ramírez would take care of Vignes's cattle for a share of the increase. Los Angeles Prefecture Records, Huntington Library, Volume 1: 321 and Volume A: 685.

⁶Baptismal records, Archival Center, Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

⁷Mary Dominica McNamee, *Light in the Valley* (Berkeley: Howell-Norton Books, 1967), 39-40.

⁸William F. James and George H. McMurry, *The History of San Jose* (San Jose: A. H. Cawston, 1933), 92-93.

dictation of Francisco P. Ramírez, Bancroft Library, BANC MSS C-D 756.

Pitt, *Decline of the Californios*, 184.

Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*, 219.

Griswold del Castillo, *The Los Angeles Territorio*, 31.

Henry D. Barrows, "J. Lancaster Brent," Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly VI (1897): 238-241.

M. Colette Standart, "The Sonora Migration California, 1848-1856: A Study in Prejudice," *Southern California Quarterly* (Fall 1966): 348-350.

1883, Prefectura del Distrito de Altar. Informe de la visita oficial a la Municipalidad de Altar en los primeros días del mes de noviembre del presente año. Archivo Histórico del Gobierno del Estado de Sonora, Carpeta 824, Ramo Justicia. Hermosillo, Sonora, México.

El Clamor Público, August 23, 1856.

Andrew Rolle, *John Charles Fremont* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 168.

Harris Newmark, *Sixty Years in Southern California*, (Los Angeles: Zeitlin & Ver Brugge, 1970), 207.

La Estrella de Occidente, May 17, 1861. On behalf of himself and other Sonora state employees, Ramírez criticized failure to pay their salaries as "immoral and fraudulent."

John W. Robinson, *Los Angeles in Civil War Days 1860-65* (Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1977), 55-61.

Los Angeles Semi-Weekly Southern News, June 18, 1862.

Statutes of California, Chapter 3, Section 4, 1862.

National Archives, Laguna Niguel, California. Records Group 49, Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Los Angeles District Office, Records of the Register. Correspondence between Commissioner J. M. Edmunds, Washington, D.C., and Francisco P. Ramírez, Los Angeles, California, 1862-1864.

La Voz de México, October 9, 1862.

Los Angeles Semi-Weekly News, October 7, 1862.

La California, April 3, 1864.

One of El Nigromante's letters to Guillermo Prieto was written in San Francisco and published in *La Voz de México*, January 21, 1864. Prieto's pseudonym was "Fidel." The

letters were later published as *Cartas a Fidel*, an enduring masterpiece of Mexican literature.

²⁸ Robert Ryal Miller, "Californians Against the Emperor," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, XXXVII (1958), 193-214.

²⁹ *El Nuevo Mundo*, December 28, 1864.

³⁰ *El Nuevo Mundo*, January 6, 1865.

³¹ *El Nuevo Mundo*, February 10, 1865.

³² *El Nuevo Mundo*, March 27, 1865.

³³ *El Nuevo Mundo*, July 31, 1865; August 21, 1865; October 23, 1865; November 22, 1865; December 11, 1865.

³⁴ *Los Angeles Republican*, March 11, 1869.

³⁵ *Verdugo v. Howard*, Case No. 1472 (May 1869); *Colima v. Ramírez*, Case No. 1482 (June 1869); *Talamantes v. Preuss*, Case No. 1553 (November 1869). District Court Records, Los Angeles Area Court Records, Huntington Library.

³⁶ Every issue of the *Los Angeles Star*, *Republican*, and *Evening Express* from June 27, 1871 to September 5, 1871.

³⁷ *Los Angeles Star*, September 13, 1871.

³⁸ *Teodoro Verdugo v. Nicolas Urias*, Case No. 1938 (February 1872). District Court Records, Los Angeles Area Court Records, Huntington Library.

³⁹ *Los Angeles Star*, September 11, 1873.

⁴⁰ *La Crónica* and *Los Angeles Star*, September 16, 1875.

⁴¹ *Los Angeles Star*, December 17, 1876.

⁴² *Los Angeles Star*, September 18, 1877.

⁴³ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, August 5, 1880.

⁴⁴ *Los Angeles Herald*, November 4, 1880.

⁴⁵ *People v. Francisco P. Ramírez*, Case No. 648 (1880), Los Angeles Superior Court Archive, Testimony of Ramon Hidaes.

⁴⁶ *People v. Francisco P. Ramírez*, Testimony of Adolfo Celis.

⁴⁷ *People v. Francisco P. Ramírez*, Testimony of William R. Rowland.

⁴⁸ Colección Donald Chaput, Archivos, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, Tijuana.

⁴⁹ Antonio Padilla Corona, "Real del Castillo: Subprefectura Política del Partido Norte de la Baja California, 1872-1888," in *Ensenada, Nuevas Aportaciones Para Su Historia* (Mexicali: Universidad Autónoma de Baja Califor-

nia, 1999), 115-163.

⁵⁰ Hesiquio Treviño, "Fundadores de Ensenada—Lic. Francisco P. Ramírez" *Vivir en Ensenada* (July 1992), 26-29.

⁵¹ Ramírez bought six parcels of land in downtown Ensenada between 1882 and 1886, Antonio Padilla Corona, "Cuadro Síntesis del Registro Público de la Propiedad de Ensenada: 1882-1886," in *Ensenada, Nuevas Aportaciones Para Su Historia*, 259-264.

⁵² The last he represented was a fugitive from Connecticut, a bank cashier who fled to Ensenada with a large sum. *Reno Evening Gazette*, May 4, 1908.

⁵³ Miguel Agustín Téllez Duarte, "Francisco P. Ramírez: Un Pionero en Ensenada," *Seminario de Historia de Baja California* (2002), 199-228.

⁵⁴ Acta de defunción, Num. Do8-136, Archivo del Registro Civil, Ensenada, B. Cfa. México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, UABC, Tijuana.

⁵⁵ Interview with the Ramírez family in Ensenada, June 14, 2002.

⁵⁶ Acta de Defunción, 23 de Noviembre, 1945, Registro Civil de Ensenada, Libro 4, Foja 41, Partida Num. 545.

LINCHOCRACIA: PERFORMING "AMERICA" IN EL CLAMOR PÚBLICO BY COYA PAZ BROWNIGG, PP40-53

At the conference organized to commemorate *El Clamor Público's* 150-year anniversary, naming was the subject of considerable debate. While "Latinos" is a historically inaccurate term, as it came into widespread use in the 1980s, I use it here to distinguish a diverse Spanish-speaking population from other immigrant communities and groups. Ramírez advocated not just for the rights of Mexicans and Californios, but Chileans and other Latin American immigrants as well, and uses a variety of terms to refer to this larger group, including los Españoles, el populacho Español, hispano-americanos, and latinoamericanos.

¹ Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 2.

² Fuoss, Kirk, "Lynching Performances, Theatres of Violence," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (1999), p. 4.

³ Roger D. McGrath distinguishes between lynch mobs and vigilance committees by noting that vigilantes "unlike members of a lynch mob, operated coolly and deliberately"

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(p. 28) and that "vigilance committees usually gave those suspected of wrongdoing a form of hearing or trial..." (p. 16). See Roger D. McGrath, "Disorder, Crime, and Law Enforcement." In *Taming the Elephant: Politics, Government, and Law in Pioneer California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 27-73. However, while lynch mobs were generally organized for more immediate purposes than vigilance committees, they often followed a performance of formality designed to give some kind of public sanction to the proceedings. At the very least, lynchers would present their evidence against the accused in hopes of extracting some kind of confession and justifying extralegal violence in the name of community justice.

This is perhaps the best-known instance of a lynching in California, in part because lynchings of women were rare not just in California but beyond. Variations of Josefa/Juanita's history abound, notably in William B. Secrest's *Juanita: The Only Woman Lynched in the Gold Rush Days* (Fresno: Sage-West, 1967). See also Nicole Guidotti-Hernandez's dissertation "Made By Violence: Chicana Narrative and the Remaking of the World, 1851-1996" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2004) which opens with a discussion of Josefa/Juanita.

Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).

For an extended discussion of the relationship between lynching and popular justice, see: Micheal J. Pfeifer, *Rough Justice: Lynching and American Society 1874-1947* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004)

See José Luis Benavides' essay on race in *El Clamor Público*, elsewhere in this issue.

Christopher Waldrep, *The Many Faces of Judge Lynch: Extralegal Violence and Punishment in America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 4.

Waldrep, Christopher. "Prologue." In *Lynching: A History in Documents* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), p. xvii.

Waldrep, *Lynching*, p. 30.

Andrew Ellicott, "Captain William Lynch." In *Lynching: A History in Documents*, p. 29

Philip Dray, *At the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Lynching of Black America* (New York: Random House, 2002), p. 18.

But not entirely. The *Los Angeles Star* could, in 1853, still use the term "lynching"

to refer the public whipping of a horse thief named Smith.

¹⁵ *La Estrella*, Feb 8, 1855.

¹⁶ *Los Angeles Star*, July 19, 1856.

¹⁷ All translations are my own.

¹⁸ The word "lynchocracy" first appeared in *El Clamor Público* as a headline of an opinion article from an unknown Sacramento newspaper (25 April 1857).

¹⁹ Jonathan Markovitz, *Legacies of Lynching: Racial Violence and Memory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), p. xxiv.

²⁰ Walter White, *Rope and Faggot: A Biography of Judge Lynch* (New York: Knopf, 1929).

²¹ Ida B. Wells was among the first to argue that the lynching of African-Americans was unrelated to the crimes of which they had been accused, turning attention toward lynchers as racist perpetrators who used false accusations of sexual assault to justify terrorizing African-Americans who threatened white privilege and dominance. Wells's insights set the stage for future discussions of lynching and her theoretical insights as to the nature of white-on-black lynching are the foundation for subsequent discussions of lynching, many of which construct the meaning of lynching around similar analyses of white anxieties surrounding questions about citizenship, power and racial color lines. Additionally, Wells' anti-lynching campaign worked to paint lynching as a Southern horror, emphasizing the most gruesome acts of violence and creating a social narrative in which African Americans, particularly men, were the innocent victims of blood-thirsty and degenerate white southern mobs. This strategy mobilized photographs of lynching and graphic descriptions of Southern lynching violence to make the point that American honor was "blemished" by lynching. Pro-lynching apologists responded by stressing the threat of African American men to white womanhood, in explicit descriptions of sexual violence and "outrage" perpetuated against white women by "Negro brutes." Waldrep notes that newspaper coverage of lynching shifted in the 1880s, moving from extensive coverage of the crime for which a lynching victim was accused to a detailed focus on the actual lynching (2002, 115). For extended discussion of the history of African American anti-lynching activism see: Ida B. Wells, *On Lynchings: Southern Horrors, A Red Record, Mob Rule in New Orleans* (New York: Arno Press, 1969) and Patricia Schechter, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett and American Reform, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill:

University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

²² James Elbert Cutler, *Lynch-Law: An Investigation Into the History of Lynching in the United States* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969, reprint of 1905 edition), p. 171.

²³ Waldrep, *The Many Faces*, p. 109.

²⁴ From the *Santa Ana Blade* and the *New York Times*, respectively. For more information on the Torres lynching, see *The Orange County Weekly*, "Strange Fruta: The Inevitable Death of Francisco Torres," April 29, 2004.

²⁵ William Carrigan and Clive Webb, "The Lynching of Persons of Mexican Origin or Descent in the United States, 1848 To 1928." *Journal of Social History* 37, 2 (2003), pp. 411-438.

²⁶ August 2, 1856.

²⁷ July 26, 1856.

²⁸ For a more detailed description of the relationship between French and Mexicans in California, see Sucheng Chan's essay "A People of Exceptional Character: Ethnic Diversity, Nativism, and Racism in the California Gold Rush." In *Rooted in Barbarous Soil: People, Culture, and Community in Gold Rush California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 45-85.

²⁹ October 9, 1855.

³⁰ May 31, 1856.

³¹ Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 51.

³² *Los Angeles Star*, Saturday, February 7, 1857.

³³ For additional information on the relationship between the *Los Angeles Star* and *El Clamor Público*, see William B. Rice, *The Los Angeles Star 1851-1864: The Beginnings of Journalism in Southern California* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1947), as well as articles by Nicolas Kanellos and Paul Grey in this issue.

³⁴ Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-Speaking Californians, 1846-1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

³⁵ In the past six years, lynching has been the subject of renewed scholarly and popular interest, owing in large part to *Without Sanctuary*, a touring collection of lynching photographs also published as a book and website.

ALIFORNIOS! WHOM DO YOU SUPPORT?"
CLAMOR PÚBLICO'S CONTRADICTORY
ROLE IN THE RACIAL FORMATION PRO-
CESS IN EARLY CALIFORNIA BY JOSÉ LUIS
NAVIDES, PP 54-68

omás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 9. Almaguer's social history applies to California the theory of racial formation formulated by Omi and Winant. They defined the process of racial formation "the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transmuted, and destroyed." Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, second edition (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 55.

Leonard Pitt, *The Decline of the Californios: A Social History of the Spanish-Speaking Californians, 1846-1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p. 45; Almaguer, pp. 55-56.

Almaguer, p. 56.

For a discussion of how the term "white" was discussed by Californio and Anglo elite, see California Constitutional Convention, *Report of the Debates in the Convention of California on the Formation of the State Constitution*, in *September and October, 1849*, ed. Eliss Browne (Washington, DC: John T. Peters, 1850), pp. 61-70. For a discussion of how the racial hierarchies in Mexico were sustained by class, education, and other racial factors, see Claudio Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico: An Anthropology of Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001) pp. 46-48.

Pitt, p. 202; Almaguer, p. 57; *El Clamor Público*, March 28, April 4 and 25, May 2, 1857.

Clamor Público, April 11, 1857. "Sabemos muy bien que denunciando a los criminales nos exponemos a ser asesinados de un momento a otro: pero no es más que cumplir con nuestro deber como periodistas, y conocemos que en nuestra conducta estamos sostenidos por todos los buenos ciudadanos, y por todos nuestros compatriotas." Unless otherwise noted, all translations from *El Clamor Público* are by the author.

Félix F. Gutiérrez, "Spanish-Language Media in America: Background, Resources, History," *Journalism History* 4, no. 2 (1977), pp. 34-41, 65-67.

Gutiérrez, "Spanish-Language Media in America," p. 39.

Albert Camarillo, *Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California, 1848-1930* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979) p. 15-16.

Muir Dawson, "Southern California Newspapers, 1851-1876. A Short History and a Census," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly* 32 (1950), p. 156; Camarillo, pp. 24-25; Walter Tompkins, "Santa Barbara Journalists, 1855-1973," *Noticias-Santa Barbara Historical Society*, no. 19 (Winter 1973), pp. 1-2.

Gutiérrez, "Spanish-Language Media in America," p. 41.

William D. Carrigan and Clive Webb, "The Lynching of Persons of Mexican Origin or Descent in the United States, 1848 to 1938," *Journal of Social History* 37 (2003), p. 426.

Carrigan and Webb, p. 426.

El Clamor Público, 2 May 1857; Pitt, 186; Félix F. Gutiérrez, "Francisco P. Ramirez: Californio Editor and Yanqui Conquest," *Media Studies Journal* 14, no. 2 (2000), p. 21.

Los Angeles Star, February 21, 1857.

Quoted in the *Los Angeles Star*, December 6, 1856.

Los Angeles Star, September 4, 1858.

"En sus columnas se abogan las teorías para la mejora del bienestar general, y el fomento de la industria y el progreso; mientras que ha resistido firmemente los atentados para degradar y proscribir a cualesquier clase por causa de la diversidad de su nación, creencia o religión."

Robert G. Lee, *Oriental: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999) p. 49.

Almaguer, p. 38.

Robert. F. Heizer and Alan F. Almquist, *The Other Californians: Prejudice and Discrimination under Spain, Mexico, and the United States to 1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 117-120.

James J. Rawls, *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), p. 171.

William B. Secrest, *When the Great Spirit Died: The Destruction of the California Indians, 1850-1860* (Sanger, CA: Word Dancer Press, 2003), p. xi; Almaguer, p. 111.

Almaguer, p. 121.

Almaguer, p. 132.

Ferdinand F. Fernández, "Except a California Indian: A Study in Legal Discrimination." *Southern California Quarterly* 50 (1968), p. 164.

Almaguer, p. 136.

Almaguer, p. 156; Doris Marion Wright, "The Making of Cosmopolitan California: An Analysis of Immigration, 1848-1870," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 19 (1940), p. 340.

Almaguer, p. 157.

Almaguer, p. 165.

Wright, 324-326.

Almaguer, pp. 26-29; Wright, p. 340.

Camarillo, p. 116.

California Constitutional Convention, p. 63.

"¡Californios!, ¿en dónde están vuestras simpatías? Si están a favor de restringir la extensión de este comercio de seres humanos entonces soportaréis al candidato Republicano. Si estáis indiferentes sobre el asunto o a favor de la esclavitud, soportaréis al candidato Demócrata para Presidente."

"Mr. Aiken es dueño de más de mil negros y es el hombre más rico del congreso: dos millones de dólares su propiedad. ¡Qué comentario tan sublime sobre las instituciones republicanas! El dueño más grande de esclavos ocupa un asiento en el Congreso y hace leyes para los hombres libres! Inconsistencias tan manifiestas como ésta son las que causan risa a los Europeos, y se mofan de nuestro gobierno republicano. No miran cómo los fomentadores de la esclavitud más vil pueden ser honestos en sus discursos 'patrióticos' a favor de igualdad y libertad."

"Entre los que votaron en contra, sea dicho para su honor, están los nombres de los Señores Castro y Covarrubias, porque ahora y en otras ocasiones, parece que solamente se han guiado por el principio de la justicia y de la humanidad."

El Clamor Público, March 5, 1859. "¿Es justo que [los negros] sean castigados porque cometieron el crimen de no haber nacido blancos?... ¿Es esta la civilización?... ¿Es esta la humanidad ilustrada del siglo XIX?... Después de prohibir la entrada a los Chinos y recargar de injustas imposiciones a los extranjeros que pisen nuestras playas, no es nada remoto que quieran privar a los nativos Californios del derecho del sufragio, luego que vean que no siguen ciegamente sus odiosos principios."

NOTES

³⁹El *Clamor Público*, November 14, 1857.

⁴⁰El *Clamor Público*, September 19, 1857.

⁴¹"Tratándose de inmigrantes de esa clase, el color importa poco... Si somos enemigos de la esclavitud, es porque el negro es hombre, porque el negro es nuestro hermano... El negro goza en México de todas las garantías que concede al hombre nuestra acta de derechos; no sólo puede ser colón, está llamado, si quiere, a ser ciudadano, a ejercer funciones públicas, y éste es uno de los timbres honrosos de nuestra patria."

⁴²El *Clamor Público*, November 1, 1856.

⁴³"La nación mexicana se compone de españoles, indios y negros mezclados unos con otros en toda variedad, los que recibirán a nuestros esclavos en términos de perfecta igualdad."

⁴⁴El *Clamor Público*, February 9, 1856, January 9 and 16, 1858, July 16, 1859.

⁴⁵El *Clamor Público*, February 9, 1858. "La compañía de los 'Negritos' que tanto divirtieron al pueblo de Los Ángeles hace dos años, han vuelto en el vapor pasado, y en la noche del jueves dieron su primera función en la casa de D. Jesús Domínguez."

⁴⁶Pitt, pp. 197-198.

⁴⁷"Los diarios del interior, dice el *Eco del Pacífico*, que tan inflexibles se manifestaban contra los infelices chinos, son los mismos que atacan ahora esa ley del modo más impertinente. Antes decían: —si no se toma una medida eficaz para expulsar del país esta población, el Estado de California se va a convertir en una población asiática. ¿Por qué toleramos a estas gentes, cuyo trabajo es poco productivo, que consumen poco, y sobre todo que no pueden enlazarse con nuestras familias? No se tuvieron presentes estos inconvenientes al perseguirlos no sólo con esta ley sino que con otros atentados inhumanos y bárbaros, mas ahora que se siente de un modo amargo, se pide la reforma de la ley y dice que los chinos son honrados, útiles e industrioses... nos alegramos que se comience a ser justo con todo género de individuos, cualquiera que sea su nacionalidad."

⁴⁸"Ahora bien, cualquiera creería que nosotros somos opuestos a que se apruebe una ley, cuyo exclusivo objeto es recompensar a aquellos que han expulsado a esos infelices asiáticos, nada de eso; por el contrario, somos de sentir que una disposición tal llenaría el objeto deseado en más de un sentido: primero, por que pagando el chino cincuenta pesos de

licencia mensualmente y al americano sólo dos, este último puede seguir comiendo gallinas todos los días, y no se quejaría jamás de tener por rival a aquel que se alimentase con ratones; y segundo, porque siendo pocos los que se aventurarían a ir a las minas por temor de pagar cincuenta pesos, que acaso no recuperaría con la faena del mes, los americanos tendrían menos oportunidades de dar esos vergonzosos escándalos, ahora tan de moda, de expulsar, colgar y tirar chinos por vía de pasatiempo. La aprobación de este bill conservador de riquezas para unos, y opresivo para otros, no podrá menos que marcar una época bien señalada para la historia del país modelo de intolerancia...."

⁴⁹El *Clamor Público*, May 24, 1856, October 17, 1857, October 30, 1858.

⁵⁰"Unos pobres chinos fueron arrestados en las minas cerca de Horsetown, por robo, no los ahorcaron, pero los trataron de la manera más cruel. Después de azotarlos hasta que no mostraban señales de vida, ¡les cortaron las orejas!, moda que parece estar en boga en este tiempo de ilustración. Se les pagó a los Indios para azotarlos, pero un ser con piel blanca, fue el que tuvo la gloria de mutilarlos."

⁵¹"Como doscientos Chinos fueron privados de sus hogares y propiedades. Los infelices huyeron despavoridos a los bosques en busca de lugares solitarios donde esconderse para salvar sus vidas. El objeto principal del populacho fue el latrocinio, tomando toda cosa de valor de que pudieran echar mano."

⁵²El *Clamor Público*, April 9, 1859.

⁵³Camarillo, pp. 200-201.

⁵⁴In Mexico, the conflicts with Indian communities translated into regional conflicts known as "caste wars" by Mexican elite. Among the most famous were the Mayas in Yucatán (1847-1901) and Chiapas (1868), and the Yaquis in Sonora (1885-1909); see Lomnitz, 49. In Sonora, the Yaquis were hunted, deported, and enslaved. Alan Knight, "Racism, Revolution, and Indigenismo: Mexico, 1910-1940," in *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*, ed. Richard Graham (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), p. 79.

⁵⁵El *Clamor Público*, December 19, 1857.

"Los indios del interior aprovechándose de la revolución, entraron a mediados de septiembre pasado, a un pueblo que se halla a sesenta millas de Mérida, de una manera amistosa, y habiendo obtenido admisión a las casas, empezaron a degollar a todos sus habitantes sin respetar sexo ni edad. Más de

500 cuerpos han sido hallados, y diariamente se descubren más en los bosques inmediatos, mutilados de la manera más cruel."

⁵⁶See for example *El Clamor Público*, February 6, 1858, April 5, 1856, April 30 and August 27, 1859.

⁵⁷"Don Hilarion García mató como [a] cien de estos bárbaros."

⁵⁸El *Clamor Público*, July 24, 1855. "La semana pasó como siempre. Hay un indio menos en las falanges de los adoradores del dios Baco. Ellos van a mejores tierras, porque dicen que no hay ley que les prohíba morir, y después de esta interesante operación no existe otra que prohíba la entrada de sus almas a las regiones infernales."

⁵⁹"El domingo a las 10 de la mañana se congregaron más de veinte indígenas en la plaza, y después de haberse cumplimentado entre sí sacó uno de ellos un puñal e hirió a dos de sus compañeros con la mayor sangre fría. Creemos que murió uno porque estuvo más de dos horas sin mostrar señales de vida, hasta que sus camaradas se lo llevaron."

⁶⁰"El jueves pasado amaneció un indio muerto cerca del puente. Tenía el rostro horriblemente mutilado. Sin duda fue asesinado por sus mismos compañeros."

⁶¹"y en la noche recibí una visita de los ciudadanos de ese lugar, y fue ejecutado según la ley de Lynch."

⁶²"Los Indios han vivido pacíficamente desde la memorable insurrección de Antonio Garra en 1851, instigada por hombres sin principios, no han mostrado la menor disposición para comenzar hostilidades contra los blancos. Más allá de la Reserva del Tejón, en un pequeño valle rodeado de altas y pintorescas montañas se encuentran unas pequeñas rancherías habitadas por Indios pacíficos e industrioses, que ya tienen cultivado un buen pedazo de terreno. Allí viven felices —y con el tiempo el número de la población aumentará considerablemente—. Esta es una verdadera Reserva, que no necesita que el gobierno la soporte."

⁶³"En California matan a un indio como matar a un pájaro o un animal feroz. La raza india es mirada como si no forma parte de la familia humana. Debe desaparecer. Si la dispersión, si la miseria y el dolor, estos dos agentes de destrucción, no operan con bastante celeridad, la raza blanca interviene y comienza la carnicería."

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REVIEWS

Edited by James J. Rawls

EARTHQUAKE EXODUS, 1906: BERKELEY RESPONDS TO THE SAN FRANCISCO REFUGEES

By Richard Schwartz (*Berkeley: RSB Books, 2006, 148 pp., \$24.95 paper*)

REVIEWED BY CHARLES WOLLENBERG, BERKELEY CITY COLLEGE

One of the most important consequences of the 1906 earthquake was the way it redistributed the Bay Area's regional population. Over half of San Francisco's four hundred thousand people were at least temporarily homeless, and many of them relocated to other Bay Area communities. Although San Francisco eventually rebuilt and attracted new residents, the city never again dominated the region to the extent that it had before

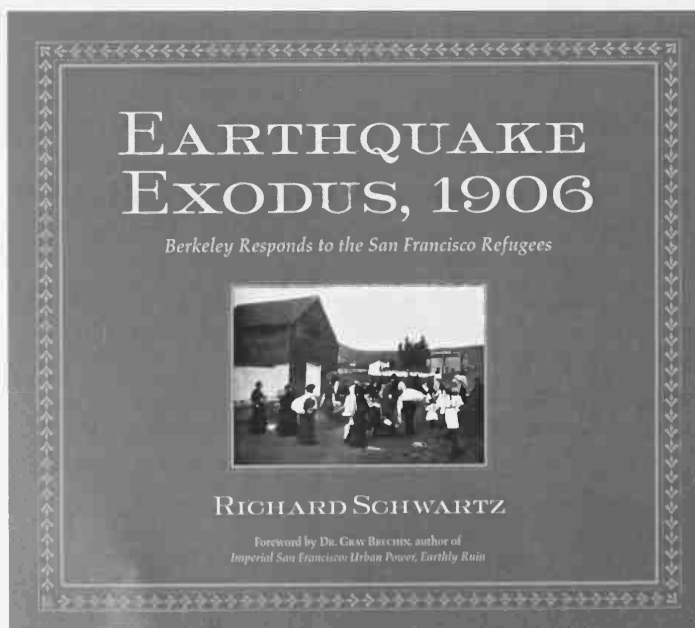
1906. After the earthquake and fire, the rapid growth of communities on what had been the regional periphery produced new urban partners and rivals for San Francisco.

Berkeley was a prime example of this process. Between 1900 and 1910, Berkeley's population more than tripled, from about 13,000 to more than 40,000, making it one of the nation's fastest growing cities during the first decade of the twentieth century. Earthquake refugees were by no means the only reason for this explosive growth, but they were a major contributing factor. Richard Schwartz's new book is thus an important study of part of the process by which Berkeley was transformed from a rural town into an integral part of the Bay Area's urban core.

Schwartz describes the moderate damage caused by the quake in Berkeley, but he emphasizes that urban life was able to proceed more or less normally, allowing the city to accommodate a flood of San Francisco refugees. As wildfire spread in San Francisco, at least 15,000 people descended on Berkeley. The UC campus, which experienced almost no serious damage, became the site of one of the East Bay's largest refugee encampments.

Schwartz concentrates on Berkeley's formal response to this emergency. He gives the city high marks for providing efficient services and humane treatment, although he does show that the prejudices of the day, particularly the strong anti-Asian feeling, affected the city's conduct. In Berkeley, as in San Francisco, provision of emergency shelter and supplies was administered by an ad hoc relief committee, formed a few hours after the quake on the morning of April 18. Composed of prominent citizens, including businessmen and university faculty and administrators, the committee was sanctioned by the mayor but was not an official arm of local government.

One exception to this pattern was public safety, which remained under the control of town marshal (and future police chief) August Vollmer. Ten days after the earthquake, the U.S. Army took control of East Bay relief work, including operations of the Berkeley camp. Two months later the army closed the camp and relocated the remaining residents to a centralized facility in Oakland. By then, some of the refugees had



turned to San Francisco, but others remained as new Berkeley residents.

In spite of his concentration on formal relief efforts, Schwartz recognizes that many of the refugees were never part of these programs, depending instead on the help of friends and relatives. Some former San Franciscans simply pitched tents in the open space surrounding the urbanized East Bay. Schwartz includes several personal stories and gives a colorful account of the University ROTC cadets on guard duty in the chaotic social environment of post-earthquake San Francisco. Best of all, the book features an excellent section of relevant historical photographs.

Although Schwartz does not fully assess the regional significance of the story, his book is a valuable contribution to the vast body of earthquake studies. By shifting the concentration away from San Francisco, Schwartz gives us a hint of the earthquake's broad social and demographic impact on all of northern and central California.

ROCK ART SAVVY THE RESPONSIBLE VISITORS GUIDE TO PUBLIC SITES OF THE SOUTHWEST

By Ronald D. Sanders (Missoula, MT: Mountain Press, 2005, 240 pp., \$16)

REVIEWED BY FRANK LA PEÑA, PROFESSOR
EMERITUS, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY,
SACRAMENTO

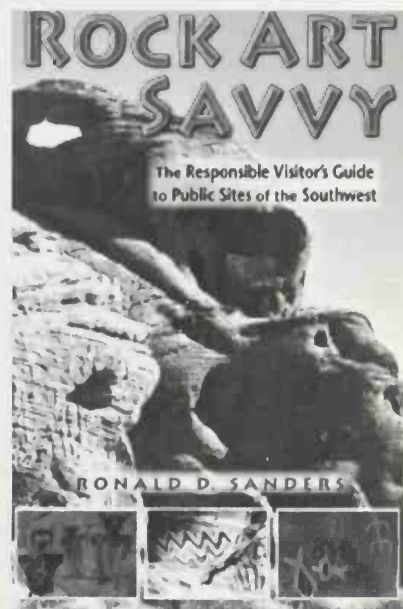
This is a compact guide and introduction to rock art sites written by the late Ronald D. Sanders, a journa-

list and amateur archaeologist. In the first half of the book Sanders defines and describes art styles, techniques, and practitioners related to the rock art sites in the greater Southwest, including southern California and Baja California. The complexity of listing hundreds of sites is modified by focusing on 150 sites and comparing in anthropological analysis the populations and the cultures that may have created the art. The author has chosen sites that are public, with unique and culturally significant imagery.

The natural world of plants and animals living, fantastic, or extinct, clouds, lightning, rain, water, and spiritual beings are all part of rock art imagery. Sexuality is an important theme: a woman would ask at special places that she be successful in birth and that the child be healthy. The vulva glyphs in San Borjitas Cave in Baja California and the cupules at Morteros in Anza-Borrego State Park are more than likely women's birthing sites. In one instance, Sanders explains the abundance of phallic images as possibly male teenagers passing the time away. Usually rock art is made with a purpose rather than to kill time. I was once told by an elder that rock art sites must be read with an understanding of the symbols but most important with the truth of intuition. It might be more important to keep the meaning and location of some sites out of public access. It is clear that, with few exceptions, Sanders is writing with an appreciation for the Native American people and with a determination to preserve and help bring a greater appreciation for rock art.

A notion omitted in this discussion is the idea that rock art sites have meaning similar to written information and contain conceptual ideas idiomatic to tribal interpretations. The imagery may be factual—depicting a hunting area, mapping, or the location of water or shelter—or it could be abstract. This is reflected in reading the symbols and understanding the importance of clans and their continuing relationship to the natural world and their ancestral legacy.

The second half of the book is a state-by-state listing of the sites with maps and contact information about each site. The photographs are helpful in visualizing the art found at some of the sites but the poor quality does not show the vibrancy and power of



REVIEWS

the art. The maps with the additional information of mileage and road conditions can also be helpful in organizing visits to sites close by.

Sanders uses five periods from 12,000 BC to the present to inform us about ancient cultures and helps us to understand how they changed and evolved into the tribes and their neighbors found in each of the states today.

In the Baja California section, Ronald Sanders lists the difficulties of bad roads, lack of facilities, and isolation. One needs to be prepared for all kinds of emergencies. The cultures here date back 7,000 to 9,000 years ago. The Montevideo site is one of Sanders' "favorite sites in the world. It consists of many polychrome abstract pictographs painted on the rock faces and under overhands of a fifty-foot-high rock outcrop. Some of the colors used are unusual shades that I have never seen anywhere else, and the geometric designs are fascinating as well."

This book is a treasury of information gathered over years of research, including a resource list of organizations, a glossary, and a bibliography. The author created a guide so the casual visitor could have a better understanding of the importance of the sites visited. The more experienced visitor will find it useful in reviewing regional distinctions and planning expeditions. With the increasing interest in rock art there is a growing need to protect the rock art sites from vandalism. Sanders felt an informed public would appreciate the beauty and be more willing to preserve these treasures from the past.

ARTISTS AT CONTINENT'S END: THE MONTEREY PENINSULA ART COLONY, 1875-1907

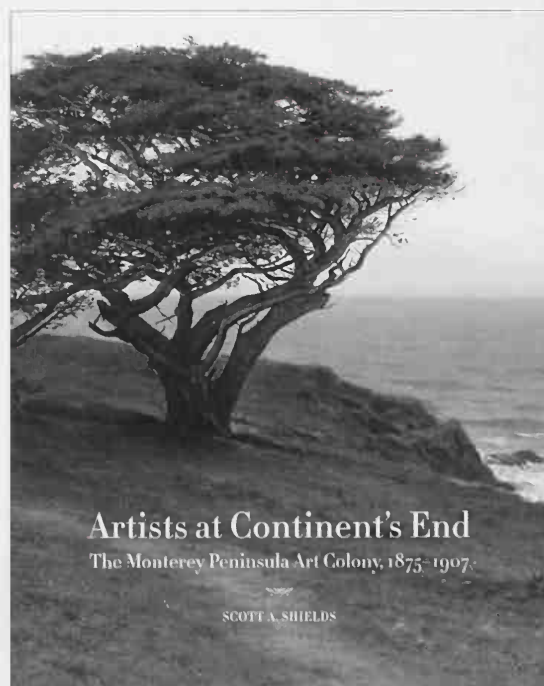
By Scott A. Shields (Berkeley: University of California Press and Sacramento: Crocker Art Museum, 2006, 357 pp., \$65)

REVIEWED BY K D KURUTZ, CO-DIRECTOR OF THE CALIFORNIA CONSULTANCY FOR ARTS EDUCATION AND CO-AUTHOR OF CALIFORNIA CALLS YOU, THE ART PROMOTING THE GOLDEN STATE 1870-1940

This book is not what it seems to be! Its tantalizing subtitle—"The Monterey Peninsula Art Colony"—suggests a focus on a creative community paralleling other coastal art colonies

of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Instead, this lavishly illustrated volume and its eloquent text provide something else.

Published concurrently with a traveling exhibition of the same title, author and curator Scott A. Shields presents a collection of artists' biographies woven together with the common thread of a sojourn to the Peninsula. Shields expands beyond the thirty-two-year time span of his title to include fuller analyses of the artists' careers. In fact, this book is a distillation of Shields' doctoral dissertation and serves as an exceptional addition to the scholarly literature on California art and artists. Although much has been written about the



hemian community that flowed through this region, few accounts have emphasized the visual artists in such a comprehensive manner.

Shields's formal survey begins with Jules Tavernier, a colorful member of San Francisco's art circle who lived in Monterey from 1875 to 1878. Shields traces Tavernier's arrival in 1875 to establish the beginning of a Monterey Peninsula art colony. He extends his survey to 1907 when the luxurious Hotel Del Monte opened its formal art gallery, dedicated to promoting California art. However, Shields includes many artists whose time on the peninsula extends well beyond 1907.

Following his opening chapter on Tavernier, Shields skips ahead to William H. Keith and George Inness, who visited the peninsula together during the spring of 1891. He also includes Charles Rollo Peters, who bought property there in 1890; Arthur and Lucia Mathews, who began visiting in 1897; Evelyn McCormick, who established a studio in Pacific Grove in 1890; Francis McComas, who arrived in Monterey in late 1898; Ottavio Piazzoni, who moved to his family's Carmel Valley dairy farm in 1837 at age 15; and photographer Arnold Genthe, who built a home in Carmel in 1905.

Shields adds biographies of twenty-five other artists who lived in or visited the Monterey Peninsula in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. This approach, while rich in detail, raises the question: Did this group of talented visitors to the peninsula make an art colony? Shields' answers: "Although cumulatively these creative persons have frequently

been labeled a colony, the nature of their interactions makes the label imprecise." The title is not a "precise" fit for all that this volume represents.

Shields's work is a survey of progressive aesthetic responses to this picturesque point on the "continent's end." The images are drawn from well-known museums as well as private collections. Elegant examples of Tonalism captured the dreamy, subdued glow of Monterey's foggy hills, and later, California's version of Impressionism captured the radiant sunlight on land and water. This region of sublime scenery not only served as an escape from urban congestion but also as a catalyst for a defining view of California Modernism. In this regard, Shields superbly makes the case in *Artists at Continent's End*.

ACTIVISM IN PURSUIT OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST: THE JURISPRUDENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICE ROGER J. TRAYNOR

By Ben Field (Berkeley: Berkeley Public Policy Press for the California Supreme Court Historical Society, Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California, 2003, 132 pp., \$21.95 paper)

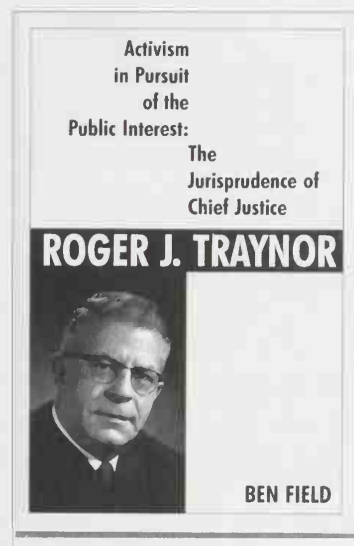
REVIEWED BY ALLEN G. MINKER, ARIZONA SUPERIOR COURT AND VISITING SUPREME COURT JUDGE, RETIRED

Roger J. Traynor was appointed to the California Supreme Court in 1940 and remained a justice for thirty years. Though he became chief justice in 1964, he began steering the court

much earlier. In this legal account, his leadership is glimpsed through four cases he decided.

Great legal precedents often begin with every day people. Here we see a black man and a white woman applying for a marriage license at the Los Angeles County Clerk's office in 1946; the wife in a five-year marriage involving alcohol, assaults, and infidelity in Manhattan Beach petitioning for a divorce in 1951; a police bust of a Los Angeles bookie operation in 1950; and a Coca-Cola bottle exploding in the hand of a Merced waitress in 1942.

After each of these worked its way from the trial court to California's highest appeal court and Traynor's consideration, four rules of law saw



REVIEWS

their birth: 1) interracial couples cannot be denied the right to marry, 2) an abused wife need not be blameless herself to obtain a divorce, 3) the prosecution may not use evidence gained by illegal entry at the trial of an accused, and 4) the manufacturer of a defective product is liable for the injuries visited upon a consumer without the consumer having to prove negligence in the making of the product.

In a sense, it is the book's tribute to Traynor that each of these decisions seems unremarkable today. But at the time they were penned by Traynor, they were complete breaks with the state of the law at the time. No court had struck down any state's miscegenation law. No court decreed no-fault divorce. No court applied an exclusionary rule for illegally obtained evidence. And no court had dispensed with a requirement of warranty or showing of negligence for finding a manufacturer liable.

Today, "activist" is used as a bad name against judges who encroach upon the legislators' role. And, in fact, Traynor eschewed that tag for himself. But author Ben Field, an assistant district attorney in Santa Clara with a doctorate in history, calls Traynor an activist in the good sense of the word. What "activist" means to Field is that a judge assesses the public policy behind a law and is unafraid to update, overrule, or modify if that law leads to outdated, unjust, and ineffectual results. Law is not fixed like commandments in stone tablets, but is to be viewed realistically and applied pragmatically

in service to the times of the people who must live by it.

This is not a biography of Traynor. Field does not try to make the reader know the man. Rather, his is a portrait of how law evolves in the hands of a confident jurist. Written much like a lengthy brief or law review article, this book will appeal to a narrow readership. Philosophy, politics and Traynor's character are dealt with as background to the book, but the foreground is legal analysis from statute to precedent.

THE IRISH IN THE BAY AREA: ESSAYS ON GOOD FORTUNE

Edited by Donald Jordan and Timothy J. O'Keefe (San Francisco: Irish Literary and Historical Society, 2005, 310 pp., \$32.96, cloth)

REVIEWED BY ROSE MURPHY, ADJUNCT INSTRUCTOR, SANTA ROSA JUNIOR COLLEGE; AUTHOR AND LECTURER ON IRISH LITERATURE AND HISTORY

Too many books on Irish immigrants in America are awash in descriptions of destitute post-Famine families crowded into East Coast ghettos, desperate for the most demeaning work and confronted with the ubiquitous "No Irish Need Apply" signs in employers' windows. No wonder, then, that scholars of Irish history and culture find the special immigrant experience in California intriguing—and worth exploring in depth. The founding of the new, dynamic, and rowdy state of California proved to be a great equalizer, and Irish wanderers and settlers encountered no distinct

established elite and few of the rigid class distinctions of New York or Boston. Especially in the San Francisco Bay area, the Irish found themselves on a fairly level playing field; all available hands, minds, and muscles were needed to build a society that would endure beyond the state's flashy Gold Rush days. An impressive collection of essays in *The Irish in the San Francisco Bay: Essays of Good Fortune* plays on this theme and points out that the Irish story on the West Coast differs dramatically from its East Coast version.

This collection includes thirteen essays covering a comprehensive range of subjects dealing with Irish American assimilation, culture—and success. The essays, all from established scholars, bring together thoughtful, well-researched pieces on the book's theme; these are interspersed with several "vignettes," essentially brief reflections on Bay Area Irish life.

Essay topics include Irish identity in the media; one features the verbal fireworks between two notable Irish Americans: native-born Peter Yorke, the firebrand labor priest devoted to Irish Bay Area culture, and Sacramento newspaperman Charles McClatchy, known for his disdain for "hyphenated Americanism" ("Irish Catholic Identity and California Public Life," Steven M. Avella). Irish arts are also addressed, as in "Old Pipers and New Age Punters, 1850–2000," by Gearoid O'hAllmhurain, which focuses on traditional Irish music played at San Francisco venues and at St. Patrick's Day events that, by as early as 1866, had become "a

andiose assembly of musicians, benevolent societies, and national associations."

a section on education, Irish women teachers of the late nineteenth century receive their due, with the welcome inclusion of Kate Kennedy, who has never been adequately recognized for her work in securing equal pay for women and tenure protection ("Pioneers in the Classroom," Janet Nolan). Also noteworthy, in a section on business and public life, "San Jose-Silicon Valley and Ireland" by Tom McEnery, focuses on Irish American leaders who played a substantial role in Ireland's technological

success. In an overview of the book's theme, Kevin Starr's "Fragments of Identity, Lost and Found" uses his personal story to reflect on how California "spoke to the deepest hungers of the Irish soul." Among the more personalized vignettes, James P. Walsh's sketch of Vincent and Vivian Hallinan and Michael Corrigan's reflections on Irish street language stand out.

A few of the pieces wander a bit from their announced themes into more extraneous territory, but as a whole, the selections provide a readable, much-needed exploration of the Irish presence in the Bay Area. A collec-

tion of this scope might well have been enhanced by an essay or vignette about the late Anne Hickey's *The Ballroom of Romance*; her book focuses on the KRB (Knights of the Red Branch) Dance Hall in San Francisco, a 1940-50s social-cultural center that deserves attention in a comprehensive discussion of California Irish life.

Books for review should be sent to

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The citizen Ramon Rayon, Brigadier General and Governor of the Federal District.

The sixth day of the current has received through the Secretary of Relations the decree that follows. His Excellency the interim president of the United States of Mexico has addressed to me the decree that follows.

"The interim President of the United States of Mexico, to the inhabitants of the Republic, know ye: That the general Congress has decreed the following.

The town of Los Angeles of Alta California is elevated to the rank of city, and it will be from now on the Capital of this Territory. Basilio Arrillaga, deputy president. Antonio Pacheco Leal, president of the Senate. Demetrio del Castillo, deputy secretary. Manuel Miranda, senator secretary."

Therefore, I order that the fact be printed, published, circulated and be given due fulfillment. Palace of the federal Government in Mexico the 23rd of May 1835.

Miguel Barragán., A.D. José Maria Gutierrez de Estrada

And I communicate it to you for your information and purposes.

God and liberty. Mexico May 23 of 1835. Gutierrez Estrada, governor of the federal District.

And so that it may be known by all, I command that it be published through the proclamation in this capital and within the district, affixing it on the usual places and circulating it to whoever should take care of its fulfillment. Given in Mexico, the 10th of June of 1835.

Ramon Rayon

Lic. José Francisco de Alcántara

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SPOTLIGHT



PHOTOGRAPHER
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PC002

LOCATION
Los Angeles County

HOLLYWOODLAND

Unveiled in 1923, the iconic Hollywood sign was intended by real estate developers as a temporary billboard for houses in a “superb environment without excessive cost on the Hollywood side of the hills.” Restored several times over the years, the sign is a fitting monument to the source of so much Los Angeles wealth: real property.

The Emil Buehler Aviation Library at the National Museum of Naval Aviation

(located at the Pensacola Naval Air Station in Florida) donated a collection of Hollywoodland photographs to the California Historical Society in 2004. Most of the images show the five hundred-acre subdivision under construction and provide little known views of a neighborhood intended from the start to be glamorous and prestigious.

The letters—pristine in this photograph—quickly began to crumble on the rugged

chaparral slope. In 1949 the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce removed the ragged sign’s last four letters, but it wasn’t until 1973 that it was officially recognized as a cultural-historic landmark, along with the lesser known Hollywoodland Gates, also built in 1923 lower on the slope of Mount Lee. In 1978 the original letters were replaced. They were refurbished again 2005.

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*"I write for no other purpose than to add
to the beauty that now belongs to me..."*

*I write a book for no other reason than to add
three or four hundred acres to my magnificent estate."*

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ABOVE: In the late nineteenth century, artist Petra Pelanconi depicted Los Angeles as she remembered it in the 1840s. Pelanconi was the niece of publisher Francisco P. Ramírez, whose newspaper *El Clamor Público* (*The Public Outcry*) documents the turbulent transition of Los Angeles from a Californio pueblo to an American city

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FRONT COVER: *San Francisco de Así Es: Francisco P. Ramírez de Los Ángeles* (detail; sumi ink on vinyl paper, 91" high x 60" wide, 2004).

Los Angeles artist J. Michael Walker portrays newspaper publisher Francisco P. Ramírez as a latter-day St. Francis, inspired by the young publisher's appeal to the better angels of Angelenos of all colors. The artist notes that Ramírez quixotically published his newspaper for a largely illiterate readership and that the trilingual writer / editor / type compositor is an unsung hero of early Los Angeles for championing social justice for all Californians.

COURTESY OF J. MICHAEL WALKER

